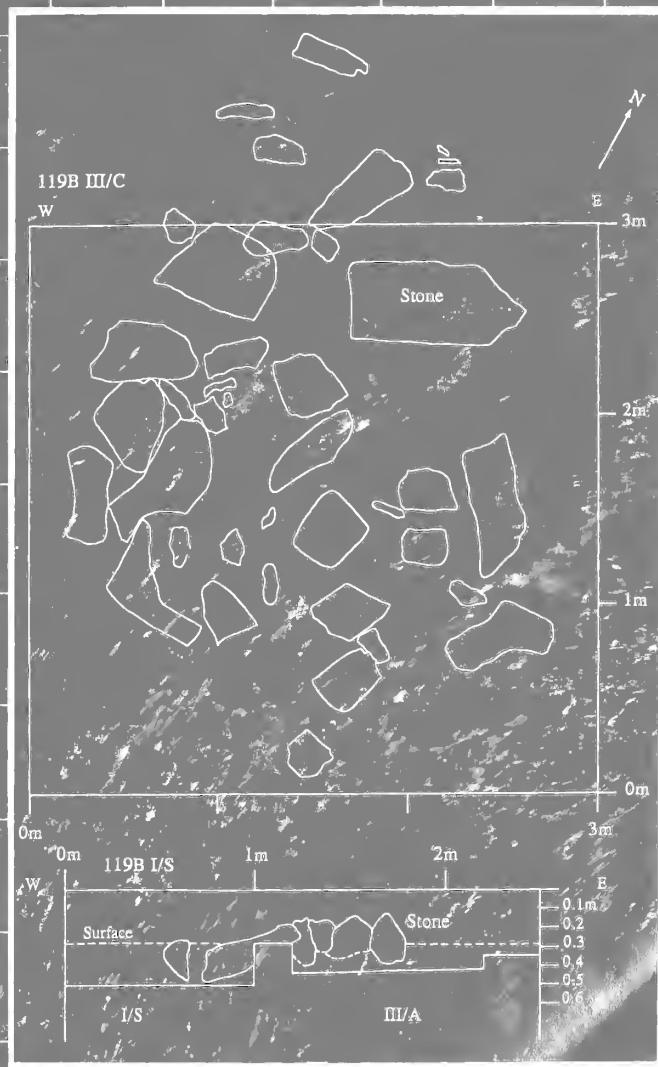


See 88  
MM

southern african

# Field archaeology

2002/3 Vol. 11 & 12



**EDITORS**  
**Johan Binneman**  
**Lita Webley**

The aim of *Southern African Field Archaeology* is to communicate basic data to professional archaeologists and the public.

Manuscripts of original research undertaken in southern Africa will be considered for publication. These may include reports of current research projects, site reports, rock art panels, rescue excavations, contract projects, reviews, notes and comments. Students are encouraged to submit short reports on projects. *Southern African Field Archaeology* also welcomes general information on archaeological matters such as reports on workshops and conferences.

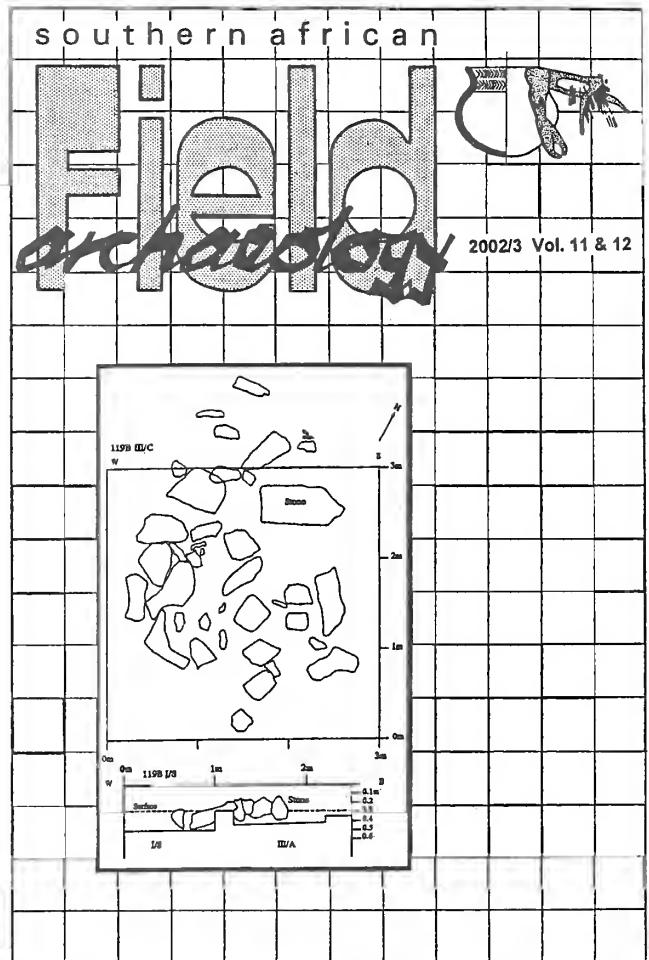
*Southern African Field Archaeology* is published once a year.

Subscription rates are as follows: R50,00 per annum for individuals and R60,00 for institutions. Outside of southern Africa U.S. \$25,00 for individuals and U.S. \$30,00 for institutions.

The views expressed by authors are their own and neither the Editors nor the Trustees of the Albany Museum take responsibility for them.

Copyright: Trustees of the Albany Museum, Somerset Street, Grahamstown, 6139. South Africa. The Albany Museum is an institution under the auspices of the Department of Sport, Art and Culture, Directorate Museums and Heritage Resources, Eastern Cape Provincial Government.

ISSN 1019-5785



**Cover illustration:**

Plan of a grain bin stand in trench III/C at Letsibogio Dam, see p. 4.

**ADVISORY EDITORIAL BOARD**

**G. Abrahams**  
*South African Cultural History Museum, Cape Town*

**J. Brink**  
*National Museum, Bloemfontein*

**S. Hall**  
*University of Cape Town*

**Z. Henderson**  
*National Museum, Bloemfontein*

**A. Malan**  
*University of Cape Town*

**D. Miller**  
*University of Cape Town*

**A. Morris**  
*University of Cape Town*

**D. Morris**  
*McGregor Museum, Kimberley*

**M. Schoeman**  
*University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg*

**B. Smith**  
*University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg*

**A. Thackeray**  
*Pretoria*

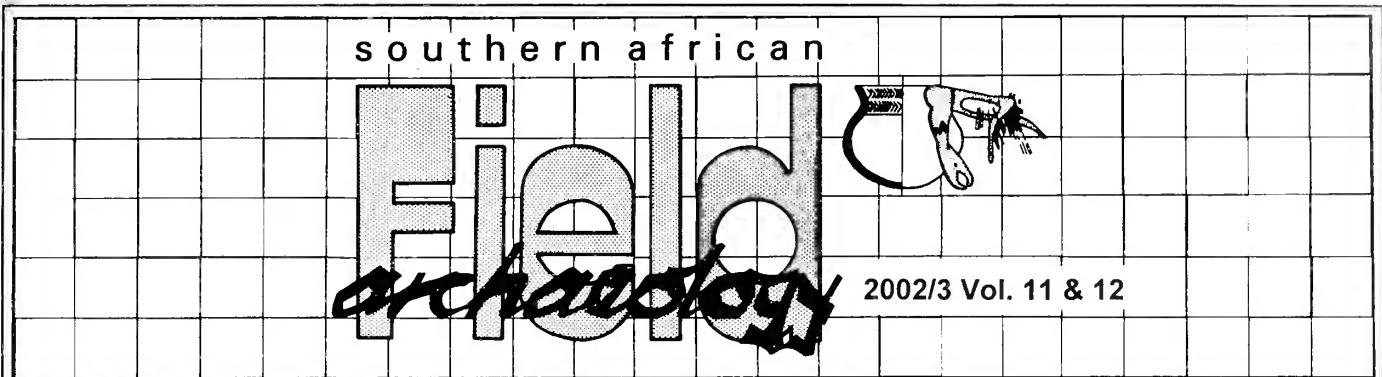
**F. Thackeray**  
*Transvaal Museum, Pretoria*

**J. van Schalkwyk**  
*National Cultural History Museum, Pretoria*

**L. van Schalkwyk**  
*KwaZulu Monuments Council, Pietermaritzburg*

**G. Whitelaw**  
*Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg*

**R. Yates**  
*South African Museum, Cape Town*



## CONTENTS

<b>OPINIONS</b> .....	1
<b>ARTICLES</b>	
Archaeological mitigation of the Letsibogo Dam: agropastoralism in southeast Botswana. <b>T.N. Huffman &amp; J. Kinahan</b> .....	4
Superficial comparisons and reality: a reassessment of the dunefield midden and the Swartkop Industry. <b>Jayson Orton</b> .....	64
Stone Age lithics from Ndondondwane. <b>Themba Zwane</b> .....	68
Archaeology along the Kavango River/Namibia. <b>Jürgen Richter</b> .....	78

## OPINIONS

### PROVINCES, ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE NATIONAL HERITAGE RESOURCES ACT

Archaeologists and palaeontologists in South Africa have become increasingly frustrated over the past two years in their efforts to comply with the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999) which replaced the National Monuments Act (Act 28 of 1969) on 1 April 2000. New legislation often leads to discontent because people have to change their way of doing things (Rudner & Rudner 1973; Van der Merwe 2003). Rudner & Rudner, for example, were unhappy that the National Monuments Act made it necessary to apply for a permit to collect surface archaeological material. The problem with the new Act has more to do with the lack of political will and bureaucratic expertise to decentralise operations from SAHRA (the South African Heritage Resources Agency which replaced the National

Monuments Council at national level) and establish a system to administer it at provincial level.

When the new Act came into force in 2000, all nine provinces in the country were given two years to set up provincial heritage resources authorities (known as PHRAs) to enable them to assume the responsibilities assigned to them by the Act.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of decentralising the management of archaeological and palaeontological resources is entrenched in the South African constitution which places decision-making about the significance of culture and heritage in the hands of the lowest level of competent governance. The vision in drafting the Act was to enable a bottom-up approach to heritage resources management to develop.

The Act is structured so that, with efficient co-operative governance, local authorities, communities, researchers and developers will conduct surveys of heritage resources and involve communities in the identification and assessment of places of significance to them. Ideally this process should form part of regional and municipal planning. Information can also be generated during the course of development or academic research and by heritage resources authorities who identify geographical or cultural gaps.

Survey information and records from the files of the former National Monuments Council will form the basis for a heritage register in each province that would be managed by a provincial heritage resources authority. With the aid of criteria developed jointly by the provincial and national bodies, the PHRAs must grade the identified places into Grade III (local significance), Grade II (provincial significance) and Grade I (national significance). In addition, PHRAs have been given 5 years until 1 April 2005 to reassess and grade all former national monuments that automatically became provincial heritage sites when the Act came into force.

Grade I sites should then be formally declared as National Heritage Sites by SAHRA and will be managed by SAHRA at national level. Permits for archaeological or palaeontological work at a Grade I site will be issued by SAHRA. Any places not formally graded, such as most archaeological and palaeontological sites, are protected by general provisions of the Act and are the exclusive responsibility of provincial heritage resources authorities.

If this system of co-operative governance can be developed, it will be far more effective than the old system

of one archaeologist at national level being responsible for all permits and the management of all sites throughout the country. The Act creates the potential to appoint at least one archaeologist and one palaeontologist in each province, and to encourage local authorities also to employ such professionals for the identification and management of sites.

Putting this system into place has taken longer than most people expected, even in a worst-case scenario. Provincial Ministers and Department officials responsible for heritage were informed at meetings as early as 1996 and 1997 that PHRAs would have to be established, but through a lack of political will, a lack of capacity and perceived difficulties in obtaining funding, no action was taken. By April 2002, when the period for establishment prescribed in Regulations by the National Minister of Arts and Culture expired, only one province, KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), had established a PHRA. One can assign blame in several quarters for the slow progress, but perhaps the most crucial obstacle was the absence of provision for funding. KZN was able to overcome this problem because the KwaZulu Monuments Council had already been in operation for decades and had an existing structure and budget.

Unfortunately, although the Act makes provision for SAHRA to take over exclusive provincial duties on behalf of a province if the province lacks capacity, the section in which this is provided for is not adequately linked to other related sections of the Act. As a result, in a court case in the Eastern Cape in 2002, Judge Kroon ruled that SAHRA could not assume these responsibilities without a formal written request from a provincial heritage resources authority or PHRA. Because eight of the provinces had not established their PHRAs, there was no authority available to request SAHRA to act on their behalf and to issue permits legally.

The delay in establishing PHRAs has been a disaster for the management of heritage resources. The Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) relating to public entities, and tighter bureaucratic and budgetary controls aimed at eliminating corruption, have made the process more complicated than it may have been in 2000. The situation has been exacerbated by the lack of leadership and guidance in the national Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) and the lack of knowledgeable staff both there and in the provincial departments and ministries. The rapid turnover of staff in the heritage sector generally has further inhibited co-operation between national and provincial government and between the Department and SAHRA.

The following steps have to be taken by a province to establish a PHRA and to enable permit applications to be processed:

- The provincial minister and department responsible for arts and culture must decide to establish a PHRA and must take the necessary steps to provide for it in the provincial budget. Ideally, this is the stage at which the province must decide whether it will set up a fully functional PHRA Council with staff to implement its decisions, or whether it will appoint a PHRA Council and request SAHRA to act as its agent on all or some of its responsibilities. Both options require some strategic and budgetary planning.
- Regulations must be published in the provincial gazette by the provincial minister responsible for Arts and

Culture that set out how the Council of the PHRA will be appointed and what the responsibilities of the members will be. At the time of writing (4 February 2004), all provinces had done this, although most of them published their Regulations only in 2003. The PHRA must be a public entity in terms of the PFMA which means that all Council members are personally responsible for the expenditure and business of the PHRA unless they formally delegate this responsibility.

- The provincial minister must advertise for nominations of members of the public willing to serve on the Council of the PHRA for three years. All provinces have done this. I am aware of details only in the Western Cape where more than 60 nominations were received and seven people were appointed.
- The provincial minister, usually assisted by the relevant Standing Committee of the provincial legislature, must appoint between 7 and 14 Council members from the list of nominees, depending on the number required in the Regulations, taking care to include people with the required skills and expertise who are representative of the demography of the province. Thus far, only Free State has not yet appointed a Council. North West has selected the Council members, but they have not yet been formally appointed.
- Once the members of the PHRA Council have been appointed, a meeting must be arranged by the provincial department and a Chairperson must be appointed by the provincial minister or by the Council members, depending on what the Regulations require.
- The Council must register as a public entity with the national treasury and must draw up a Strategic Plan for the next 3 years with a budget attached. The Strategic Plan must indicate which of the provincial legal responsibilities in the Act it wishes to manage and which it will not. The plan and budget must be submitted to the provincial department for forwarding to treasury.
- Depending on what duties the PHRA wishes to perform, and consequently on the budgetary arrangements that have been made (usually including token remuneration and reimbursement of expenses for Council members who attend formal meetings), the PHRA may:
  - in collaboration with the provincial department, appoint staff and purchase office equipment if budgeted for in the Strategic Plan in order to implement decisions and manage the office;
  - open a bank account; and
  - appoint an accounting officer if this will not be the Council.
- The PHRA should then formally apply to SAHRA Council for the competence of the PHRA to be assessed.
- If the PHRA does not meet the criteria for competence set by SAHRA, the PHRA may formally request SAHRA to perform duties on its behalf on an agency basis.

This is the route that has been, or will soon be, taken by seven of the nine provinces. With the exception of KZN and the Western Cape, all PHRAs have requested, or are expected to request, SAHRA to take over responsibility for archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites on an

agency basis. Applications are reviewed by the SAHRA permit committee and by the Chairpersons of the PHRAs. Formal agreements have already been signed for Gauteng and Limpopo provinces. They have been drafted for the Northern Cape and Eastern Cape and will be drafted in the next few months by North West and Mpumalanga. Free State is expected to go the same route later in the year. Gauteng was assessed as competent to take on responsibilities related to the built environment.

- When SAHRA assesses a PHRA as competent to carry out its responsibilities for archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites in terms of the Act, the PHRA should, amongst other actions:
  - establish policies and procedures for dealing with applications;
  - appoint committees of experts to advise it;
  - draft regulations for the submission and assessment of permit applications or other duties as identified in the Act;
  - if required in terms of the National Environmental Management Act or Environment Conservation Act, publish the draft regulations for public comment and then finalise and publish them in the provincial gazette;
  - delegate specified responsibilities to departmental officials, PHRA staff and/or specialist committees appointed by the Council – for example, a committee consisting of Council members, archaeologists and palaeontologists may be appointed to assess permit applications and/or archaeological impact assessments, and to make policy, recommendations and decisions that will be carried out by the archaeologist appointed to the staff;
  - draw up formal agreements with SAHRA regarding those sections of the Act that give SAHRA and PHRAs joint or shared responsibility (such as graves and burial grounds) to clarify who will be responsible for what;
  - draw up a formal agreement with the provincial department of environmental affairs with regard to the procedure to be followed for the assessment and records of decision of archaeological impact assessments;
  - establish a database that is compatible with SAHRA's national database and ensure that copies of all permits, reports and impact assessments are lodged with SAHRA; and
  - develop a logo and corporate identity, and distribute pamphlets and other information to inform the public of the existence of the PHRA and its responsibilities.

This is the route that has been taken by Amafa aKwaZulu Natali (the KwaZulu Natal provincial heritage resources authority), and by Heritage Western Cape, the PHRA in that province. Amafa has posts for two Archaeologists and a total staff complement of about 40. One of the archaeological posts is vacant but an appointment will be made soon following the resignation of Annie van der

Venter. The other is filled by Themba Zwane. Heritage Western Cape has appointed Dr Antonieta Jerardino as Archaeologist and a junior position will be filled in the new financial year. The Heritage Western Cape Strategic Plan has made provision for the appointment of a total of 16 staff members that will include a palaeontologist.

Various strategies have been adopted to overcome the problems experienced in the provinces, but none has been entirely satisfactory. Because archaeologists working at sites managed at national level have been able to apply to SAHRA for permits, there has been pressure to assess sites as Grade 1 to enable research to proceed. Taking a longer term view, the Palaeontological Society of South Africa has lobbied SAHRA and the national Minister to consider amending the Act to make palaeontology an exclusively national responsibility, arguing that research areas frequently straddle provincial boundaries. Neither of these is an ideal solution, however, and will increase the burden on SAHRA without building capacity at provincial and local level.

All archaeologists and palaeontologists can participate in the democratic process by nominating fellow practitioners to PHRA Councils when the opportunity arises again in 3 years. They can encourage PHRAs to budget for and prioritise the appointment of provincial archaeologists and palaeontologists and indicate their willingness to serve on archaeology and palaeontology permit review committees. They can draw attention to the significance of archaeological and palaeontological resources by making the results of surveys available to PHRAs and the national database.

As the progress achieved by Heritage Western Cape and KwaZulu Natal has shown, it is possible to establish a PHRA with a staff complement and budget exceeding that of a SAHRA provincial office (which in the Western Cape has only two staff members). Each PHRA that delegates its responsibilities to SAHRA delays the development of capacity. The sooner provinces accept their responsibilities the better.

#### Note:

<sup>1</sup> Although much of the Act refers to the built environment and cultural landscapes, this review of provincial progress is limited to responsibilities related to archaeology and palaeontology. It excludes maritime archaeology and exports as these are a national responsibility of SAHRA.

**Janette Deacon**  
**49 Van Riebeeck Street**  
**Stellenbosch, 7600**  
*email: hjdeacon@africa.com*

#### References

Rudner, J. & Rudner, I. 1973. End of an era. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* 28:13-26.  
 Van der Merwe, N.J. 2003. South African archaeology and palaeontology in legislative quagmire. *South African Journal of Science* 99:237-238.

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION OF THE LETSIBOGO DAM: AGROPASTORALISM IN SOUTHEASTERN BOTSWANA

T.N. HUFFMAN

*Archaeological Resources Management, School of Geography,  
Archaeology and Environmental Studies,  
University of the Witwatersrand,  
Johannesburg, WITS 2050*

and

J. KINAHAN

*Quaternary Research Services  
P.O. Box 22407, Windhoek,  
Namibia*

## ABSTRACT

The Letsibogo Dam basin incorporated over 120 Iron Age sites. Zhizo settlement, dating to between AD 700 and 1000, was well represented, but the area was unoccupied for the next 400 years. The emphasis on ivory during the K2 period supports the likelihood that Letsibogo may have been part of a hunting reserve at that time. Later, the concentration of 15th century Khami settlements shows that an entire chiefdom occupied the region. Khami commoners arranged their settlements according to the Central Cattle Pattern, depositing household refuse around grain bins at the back. Phytoliths, charcoal, faunal remains and numerous grain bins show that the climate was favourable to agriculture. Letsibogo Moloko, that is, 15th to 17th century Sotho-Tswana people, lived in the neighbourhood at about the same time. Generally, however, Letsibogo Moloko postdates Khami in the dam basin, and interaction was limited.

## INTRODUCTION

The Department of Water Affairs of the Government of Botswana commissioned the construction of Letsibogo Dam on the Motloutse River to supply the greater Gaborone area. The dam wall itself was built about two kilometres downstream of the confluence of the Sedibe and Motloutse rivers, just upstream of Mmadinare village (Fig. 1). The impounded water reaches the 850 metre contour, flooding an area of about 18 km<sup>2</sup>.

In recognition of the impact on cultural resources, Water Affairs required an archaeological investigation. Archaeological remains in Botswana are protected by the Monuments and Relics Act (1970) and may only be disturbed or destroyed after the Minister of Home Affairs grants a permit. The National Museum, in its capacity as the compliance agency, advises the Minister when the archaeological investigations are complete. These investigations normally follow a three-phase process: survey (Phase I), test excavations (Phase II) and full mitigation

(Phase III) of particularly important sites. In the first Phase I survey of the reservoir area, Campbell (1988, 1991) located over 90 sites, and then later surveys (Hanisch *et al.* 1993) brought the total to 123 (Fig. 2). The purpose of these surveys was to identify archaeological sites, to assess their significance and then to recommend appropriate Phase II mitigation measures.

Most sites dated to the Iron Age, that is the last 2000 years, and they represented settlements of agropastoralists who spoke various Bantu dialects. Furthermore, most pottery corresponded to known culture-history facies and clusters in Botswana, Zimbabwe, and South Africa, and the significance of each site could be assessed in terms of the known sequence. Among other issues, Phase I work raised the possibility of a local origin of Moloko. To clarify this issue, as well as the general sequence, the assessment recommended that 48 sites receive further attention.

Phase II involved various test excavations (Campbell *et al.* 1995), and the results (Campbell *et al.* 1996) suggested that, (1) an internal origin for Moloko was unlikely, and

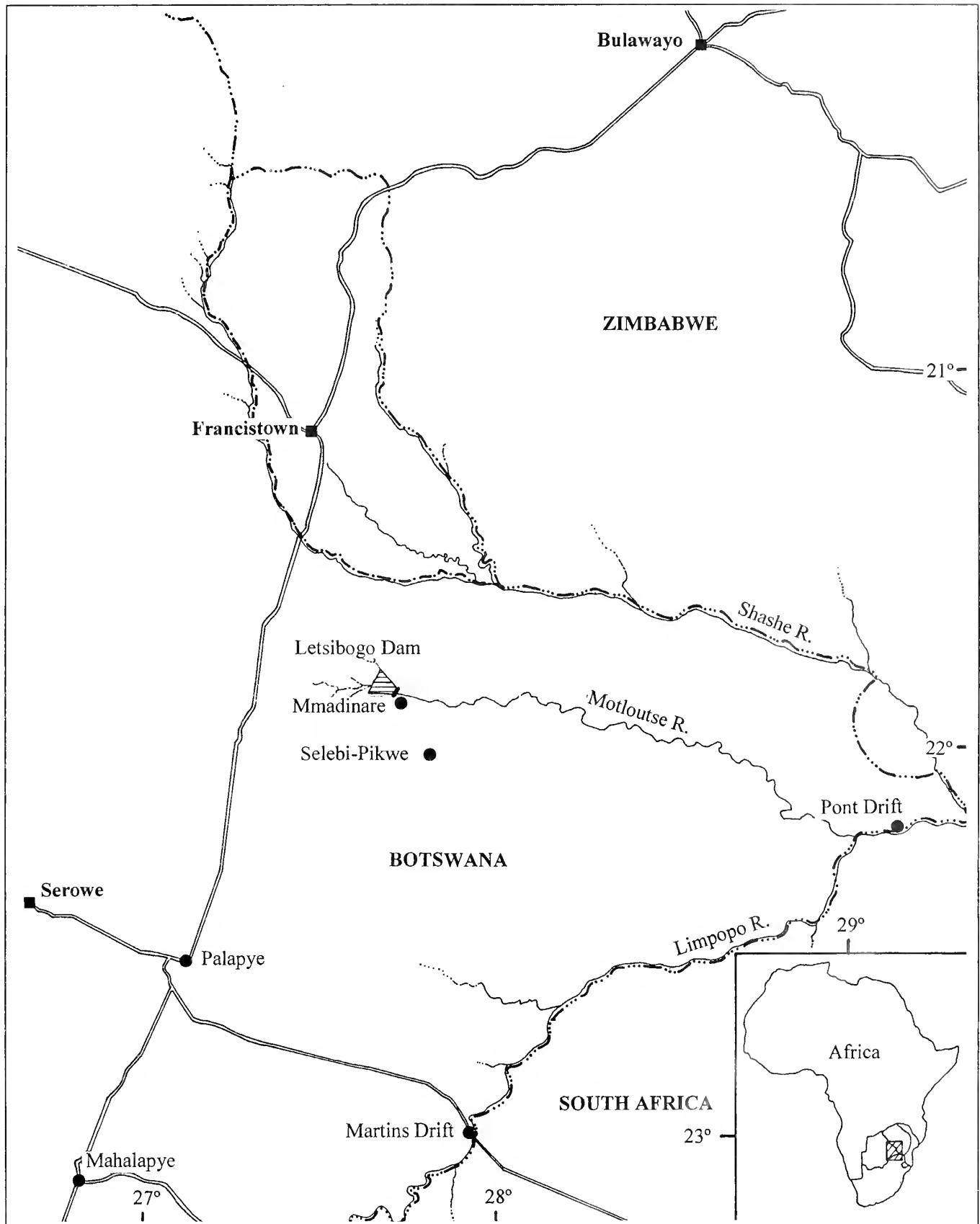


Fig. 1. Letsibogo Reservoir area in southeastern Botswana.

(2) there had been large-scale interaction between Khami (representing Shona speakers) and Moloko (Sotho-Tswana) populations.

This last interpretation needed further investigation, and there were still unresolved issues about subsistence, ceramic style, dating and environment. As a result, the

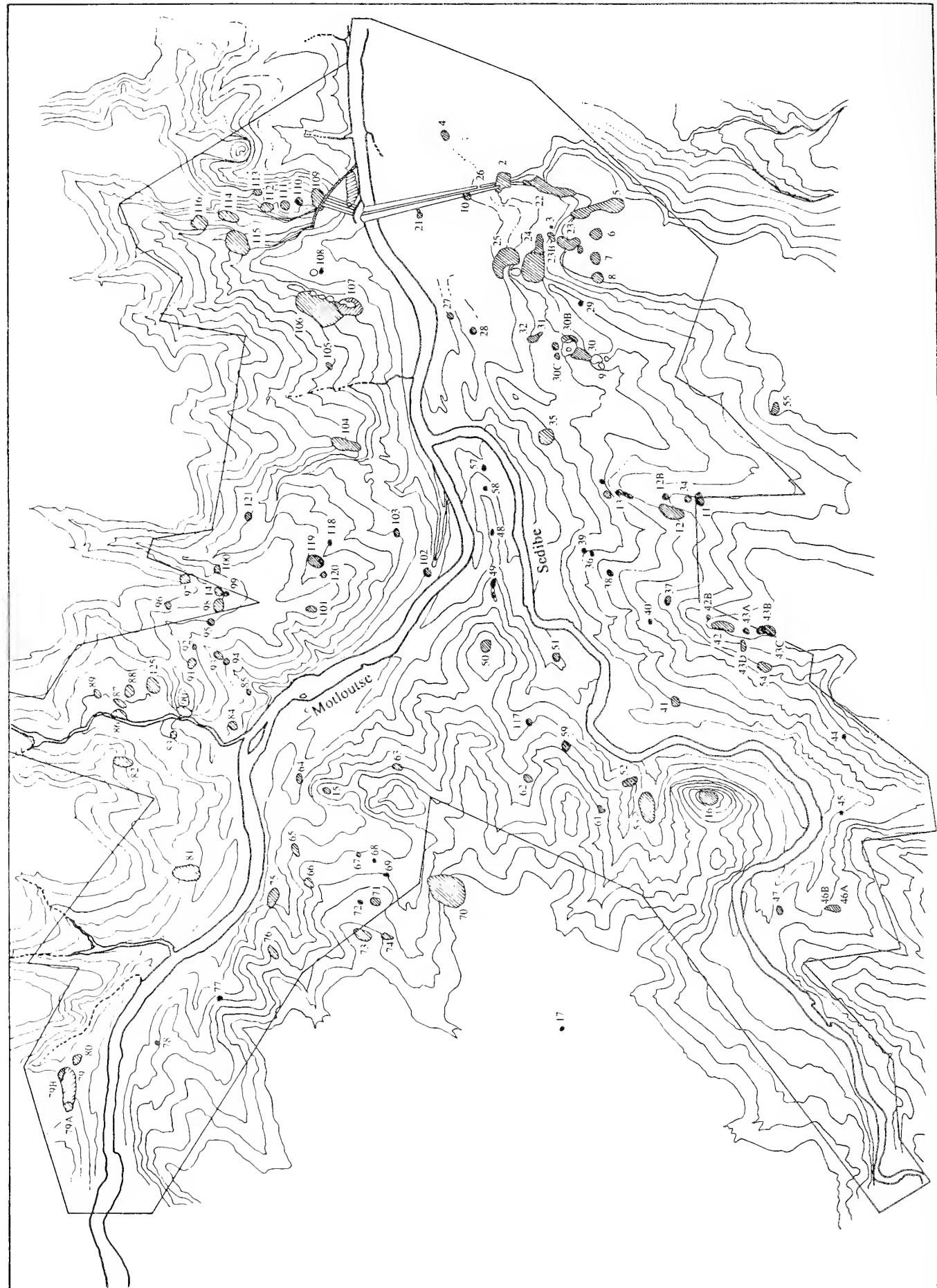


Fig. 2. Archaeological sites recorded in the reservoir area.

report recommended that 11 sites receive full mitigation, or at least further excavations.

Water Affairs appointed Environmental Consultants, a division of AquaTech Groundwater Consultants (Pty), Ltd., to carry out Phase III in 1998. Environmental Consultants divided the work among three sets of archaeologists: Team 1, Dr J. Kinahan (Quaternary Research Services); Team 2, Professor T.N. Huffman (Archaeological Resources Management with J.A. Calabrese, A.B. Esterhuyzen & J. M. Smith) and Team 3, Professor R.J. Mason. Because of the relatively short time available, mitigation was to be sufficiently flexible so that each team could focus on the most productive sites.

Team 1 investigated Sites 30B (Zhizo), 38 (Khami) and 125 (Leopard's Kopje). Their fieldwork took place between June 8 and 27, 1998. Team 2 was responsible for Sites 46 (Moloko & Khami), 86 (Khami), 110 (Zhizo & Khami) and 119 (Moloko). They began on July 26 and ended on August 13. Team 3 was allocated Sites 13 (Moloko), 24 (Historic), 79A (Moloko) and 79B (Khami). Each team hired local labour, while four students from the University of Botswana helped Team 2. The dam wall is now complete, and archaeological sites below the high water line are gone.

As required under the Terms of Reference, full reports are on file at the National Museum and Art Gallery, Botswana (Huffman & Calabrese 1999; Kinahan 1999). Publication of final results is also required and some have already appeared (Kinahan 2000). Here we present the full results of Team 1 and Team 2.

## METHODS

The approach of each team varied somewhat depending on the unresolved issues arising from Phases I and II. Team 1 concentrated on site formation processes and the environmental history of human settlement. Following the Terms of Reference, they placed special attention on soil composition and soil erosion. For granulometric analysis, they followed standard techniques (Selly 1976) that yielded indices of symmetry (skewness) and relative peakedness (kurtosis) of grain size distribution. Silt and clay particles were not separated. They also identified major mineral constituents and searched for grain surface polish, or surface 'frosting' (cf. Folk & Ward 1957; Friedman 1961; Musonda 1987).

Team 1 was also interested in an erosion gully on Site 30B. To calculate the erosion rate, they measured two trees, (1), *Colophospermum mopane* and (2), *Combretum apiculatum*, from the inflection point of the basal flare of the stem to indicate the maximum possible soil level (cf. Lamarche 1968). They then related this root exposure to the age of the trees based on growth rings, following Stocking (1984) and Schnabel (1994). Growth rings were counted at 10x magnification on three radii. Presumably, the root exposure rate was continuous throughout the age of the trees (cf. Lilly 1977).

Because of the unresolved issues surrounding the culture-history sequence, Team 2 concentrated on ceramic

analyses. Considering the multiplicity of shapes, sizes, pastes, lip forms, designs and design organizations, an almost infinite number of variables could be classified. For culture-history purposes, it is particularly important to choose variables that truly represent groups of people.

A ceramic experiment some years ago identified the appropriate variables by applying different classifications schemes to the ceramics of known groups of people (Huffman 1980). As a premise, if a classification cannot correctly select known groups, then it has no reliability when the answers are unknown. Classifications with the lowest accuracy used fragments rather than whole vessels; and so, such variables as decoration technique and single motifs had priority. In contrast, classifications based on whole vessels were highly accurate because they incorporated motif combinations. The best procedure for culture-history purposes determines multidimensional types from the combination of variables of vessel profile, decoration position and decoration. This procedure can establish archaeological identity. By convention, we use the name of the pottery for the name of the people.

To understand the way of life of the entities established by ceramic style, all three teams concentrated on settlement organization. Models of settlement organization provide a framework for investigating relationships between features, and between features and artefacts. Two organizations could apply to the settlements in the Letsibogo area: the Zimbabwe Pattern and the Central Cattle Pattern (see Huffman 1986b, 1996b; Van Waarden 1989). The first pattern correlates with class distinction and sacred leadership. A stonewalled palace that provided ritual seclusion for a sacred leader characterized royal settlements. Ideally, the palace should be located at the east back of the settlement opposite the west front area designated for followers. A court where men resolved disputes stood to one side, opposite the royal wives' compound.

In contrast, Zimbabwe commoners organized their settlements according to the Central Cattle Pattern. This second pattern was associated with people who had a patrilineal ideology about procreation (i.e., their blood came from their father), male hereditary leadership, a preference for bride wealth in cattle and a positive attitude about the role of ancestors in daily life (Kuper 1982). Settlements of these people comprised an inner zone that was the domain of men and an outer zone associated with married women. As a rule, the centre encompassed cattle kraals where men and other important people were buried, sunken grain pits or raised grain bins for long-term storage, a public smithing area and the men's court. The outer residential zone, the domain of women, incorporated the individual households of married women with their sleeping houses, kitchens, granaries and graves. Archaeologically, the location of cattle kraals in relation to other features is important in distinguishing between these two patterns (Huffman 2001).

To test for the presence of cattle kraals, Team 2 examined soil samples for their phytolith content. Phytoliths, or plant opal, are microscopic silica formations inside plants such as grasses, sedges and herbs which become incor-

orated in sediments when plants decay (Piperno 1988). By examining soil samples, it is possible to identify prehistoric dung deposits and sometimes to distinguish between large and small stock kraals. Because sheep and goats nibble their food, they break a large proportion of the phytoliths, especially when the soil is gritty, whereas cattle regularly pass undigested plant matter after chewing the cud, leaving clusters of phytoliths behind. As a rule, Iron Age people kraaled their stock, and so the phytolith content inside a kraal is considerably higher than outside. For present purposes, four categories derived from conservative estimates established the relative differences between samples: virtually none (0-10 phytoliths per 100 mg sample of soil under a standard cover slip), low (~100), medium (~300) and high (~1000). Dr E. Robinson, then with the Botany Department, University of the Witwatersrand, helped with the analyses.

Because of the sandy loam in the dam area, phytolith fragmentation may not be sufficient to discriminate between large and small stock kraals. To increase the probability of recognizing the difference, Teams 1 and 2 examined kraal deposits for spherulites, a calcium crystal produced in the intestines of sheep and sometimes goats, and occasionally in cattle (Brochier *et al.* 1992; Canti 1997). Team 2 established a reference using modern sheep dung, and both teams followed the procedure outlined by Brochier.

Furthermore, Team 1 analysed nutrient concentrations in soil samples, especially orthophosphate anomalies, to help identify and delineate kraal deposits. They also measured nitrate and nitrite anomalies by remission photometry to mark middens with wood ash.

Other laboratory analysis included charcoals. A.B. Esterhuyzen in Team 2 examined samples microscopically to determine species. If a chronological sequence can be established, the species list could help to document climatic change.

A. Brown, University of the Witwatersrand, analysed faunal samples for Team 3 and confirmed the identification of teeth for Team 2. In all cases the various teams followed standard procedures established by Brain (1974), Klein & Cruz-Uribe (1984) and Walker (1985).

We turn now to a review of the existing archaeological and palaeoenvironmental knowledge of the region before the project began.

## BACKGROUND

The Letsibogo area lies in the eastern hardveld, underlain by granite gneiss of the basement complex (Key 1976). Quartzites and calc silicates also occur. These rocks outcrop as inselbergs and small ranges. The Sedibe and Motloutse rivers and their tributaries flowing in between the ranges and inselbergs have laid down good alluvial soils suitable for cultivation.

This topography and geology support a mixed open tree savannah dominated by mopane with some terminalia. The hills often provide conditions suitable for various commiphora, kirkia and croton species, while riverine vegetation

includes large specimens of *Combretum imberbe*, zizyphus, and acacia. Archaeological sites often occur as open patches within the mopane that contain thorn bush, especially *A. tortilis*, grewia thickets and isolated specimens of *Boscia albitrunca*.

Although it is today quite densely settled (10 persons per hectare in some places [Campbell 1990]), the population is unevenly distributed between towns and large villages on the one hand, and scattered farmsteads and cattle posts on the other.

Despite the substantial population, agricultural potential of the area is low. Indeed, the average annual precipitation of 350 mm or less is not sufficient for the cultivation of maize, sorghum and millet (FAO 1978). Dryland farming is nonetheless an important component of the subsistence economy. Sandy loams in this area are moderately fertile (Sims 1981, cited in Thomas & Shaw 1991:97), but limited, and they are probably the most important resource for agriculture. Another component includes vegetable gardens where reliable water supplies exist. In addition, farming emphasizes a mixture of small stock and cattle, which graze and browse in the dense bush. The shallow wells that herdsmen excavate in the riverbed today are probably the continuation of a practice that existed for the entire history of agropastoral settlement in this area.

This combination of marginal farming conditions and relatively high population density has not always existed in the Letsibogo area. Climatic variations over the last 2 000 years closely correspond with the distribution and intensity of agropastoral settlement (Tyson & Lindesay 1992; Huffman 1996a). Indeed, there have been marked fluctuations in population density throughout southern Africa since the first appearance of farming settlements. At the beginning of the Early Iron Age, from about AD 400 to 600, the climate appears to have been warmer and wetter than today in the summer rainfall region of eastern Botswana, southwestern Zimbabwe and northern South Africa. Within this wider region (Fig. 3), there is evidence for an early occupation of Happy Rest (in the Kalundu Tradition) and Gokomere people (in the Nkope Branch of the Uwele Tradition).

Facies of the next phase of each Tradition are better represented. Settlements of the Zhizo facies (derived from Gokomere) in particular occur throughout the wider area. The largest Zhizo settlement on record is at Schroda (Hanisch 1980) near the confluence of the Shashe and Limpopo rivers. Dating to between AD 900 and 1000, Schroda is also the first capital to form a link with the Indian Ocean ivory and gold trade. Glass beads from this trade have been found in a number of Zhizo sites (Hanisch 1980; Kiyaga-Mulindwa 1992; Calabrese 2000), including the Palapye area (Denbow 1982, 1983, 1986). Recent isotopic studies (J. Smith, pers. comm.) indicate that rainfall at this time was no better than today: and so, Zhizo people in the Shashe-Limpopo basin would have found it difficult to survive by subsistence agriculture alone. The distribution of sites, together with the ivory debris at Schroda, suggests that Zhizo people purposefully moved into the area to hunt elephant for the Indian Ocean trade.

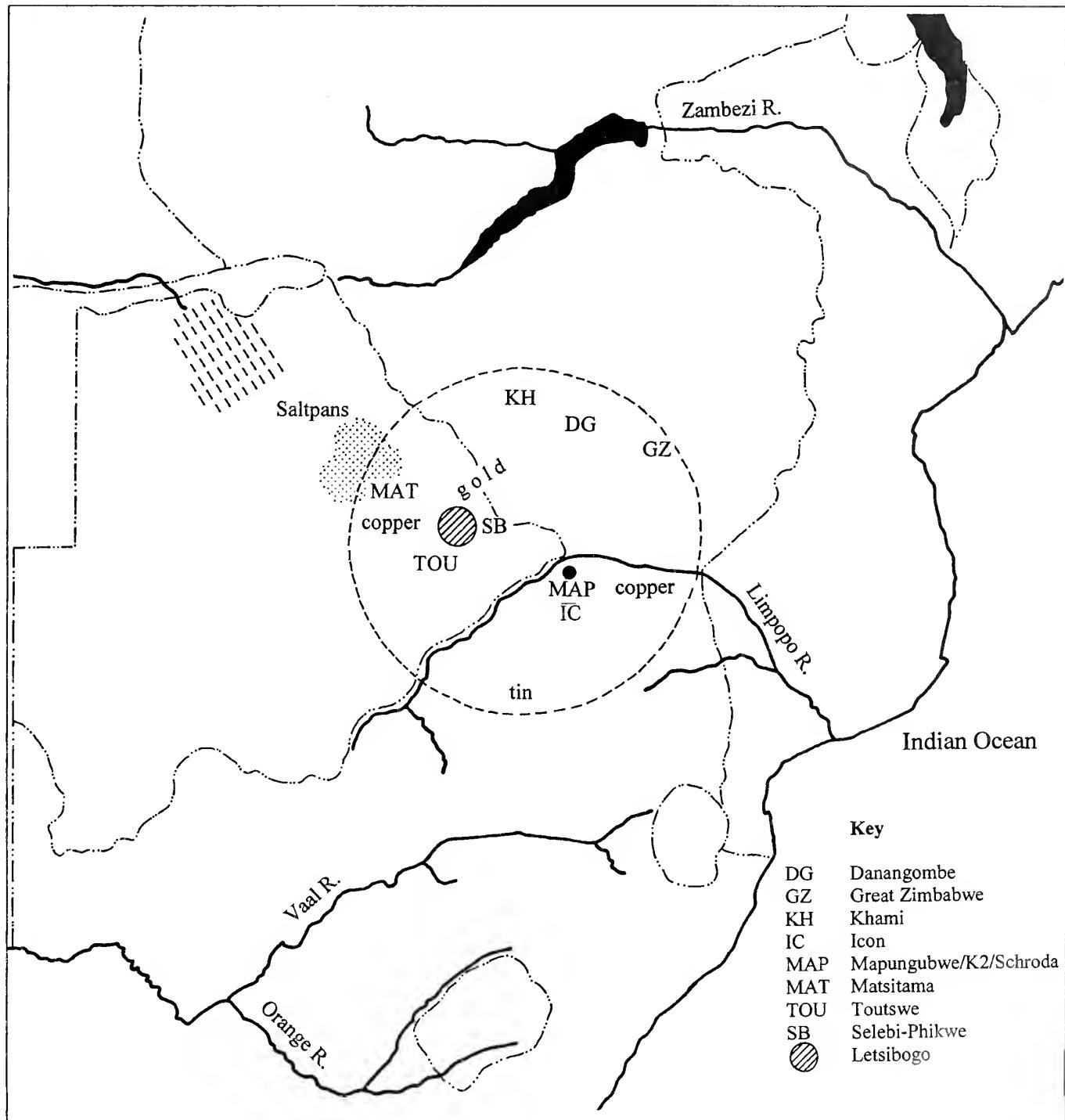


Fig. 3. Wider project region.

At about AD 1000, Leopard's Kopje people (derived from Happy Rest) moved into the Shashe-Limpopo Basin. Generally speaking, Zhizo people abandoned the Limpopo Valley, and established a new capital to the west at Toutswe, near Palapye. Some Zhizo people remained behind (Calabrese 2000), but nevertheless, Leopard's Kopje people controlled the region.

The defensive location of many Toutswe-phase settlements, including Toutswe itself, suggests that Toutswe and Leopard's Kopje people were in competition. For a while, the Motloutse River appears to have been a boundary

between the two groups. In any case, Leopard's Kopje dominated the African link of the coastal trade from their capital at K2, and they accumulated an unprecedented amount of wealth. This extraordinary wealth, combined with intensive cultivation of the Shashe-Limpopo floodplains, contributed to internal social transformations that culminated in class distinctions and sacred leadership (Huffman 1982, 2000). These two features were defining characteristics of the Zimbabwe culture, first expressed at Mapungubwe when the Leopard's Kopje capital shifted there at about AD 1220. At this time, there were two spatial

organisations, the new Zimbabwe Pattern at royal centres and the old Central Cattle Pattern at commoner settlements.

During the 13th century, Mapungubwe people traced the alluvial gold in the Shashe-Limpopo basin to its source in the Gwanda-West Nicholson greenstone belt of Zimbabwe. Mapungubwe pottery was found at the Macardon Claims, and the oldest known gold mines date to the Mapungubwe period (Summers 1969) inside the Mapungubwe cultural area.

The main Mapungubwe period came to an end at about AD 1300 with the start of the Little Ice Age. Cold conditions at that time made cereal cultivation impossible and the entire Shashe-Limpopo basin was abandoned. Some Mapungubwe people moved west beyond the Motloutse (see Lose pottery in Kiyaga-Mulindwa 1990). As a consequence, Great Zimbabwe became Mapungubwe's political, cultural and economic successor. A few Zimbabwe-phase settlements have been recorded in the wider region, but generally, settlement did not intensify until the succeeding Khami phase.

Khami, near present-day Bulawayo, succeeded Great Zimbabwe as the next major capital between AD 1420 and 1450. This shift in capitals coincided with a warm pulse during the Little Ice Age, and for about 200 years the greater project area was once again suitable for agropastoralism. Khami itself was the headquarters of an extensive state under the Torwa dynasty (Beach 1980) that probably extended west to the Makgadikgadi salt pans. According to some oral histories (Van Warden 1988, 1991), the Motloutse River formed the southwestern boundary.

Within the boundaries of this state the capital controlled a vast network of mining. A large copper mine near Matsitama has been radiocarbon dated to the Khami period, and associated commoner settlements near the mine contained typical Khami pottery (Huffman *et al.* 1995). Many other copper and gold workings are known around Francistown (Molyneaux & Reinecke 1983), and presumably they date to the same time. Mining stopped at Matsitama in the mid 17th century with the destruction of the Khami capital.

The Portuguese sacked Khami during a civil war in the 1640s, and 50 years later Danangombe (also called Dhlo-Dhlo) became the new capital under the Changamire Rozwi (Beach 1980). By this time, colder and drier conditions once again prevailed, and for this and other reasons Rozwi interests did not extend as far west as the Letsibogo area. Consequently, the many Khami-phase ruins near Selebi-Phikwe probably date to the period when the Torwa ruled from Khami.

This first appearance of Sotho-Tswana people is marked by the cluster of ceramic facies called Moloko (Evers 1981, 1988; Huffman 2002), and dates to the 14th century. The first ceramic phase, known as Icon (Hanisch 1979), occurs in northern South Africa immediately after the abandonment of Mapungubwe. A later merger of Icon and Khami pottery resulted in the Letaba style associated with Venda, and the ceramic sequence most probably reflects the creation of Venda as a language and new group identity (Loubser 1991).

Unfortunately, the 18th to 19th century history of the wider project area is not as archaeologically well known as the earlier periods. According to oral traditions, various Sotho-Tswana groups lived in the region by this time. The area between the Motloutse and Tati rivers, northeast of Letsibogo, was the overlapping boundary between the powerful Ngwato and Ndebele, and raiding by both groups was a possibility. From about 1853 to 1897, hunters, missionaries and traders traversed the project area on their way to Matabeleland (Campbell 1988, Appendix IV in Phase-I report). There were probably cattle posts in the Letsibogo area, but no substantial settlements until 1912 when Mmadinare was established.

Even this brief outline shows that the Letsibogo region was not isolated from events and developments elsewhere. Indeed, the significance of the Motloutse River to various political entities underscores the research potential of the Letsibogo project.

We present the results of the Phase III mitigation of Teams 1 and 2 in terms of the culture-history sequence, beginning with Zhizo. We introduce each period with a brief summary of the Phase I and II results and the research questions each site was expected to answer.

## THE INVESTIGATIONS

### ZHIZO

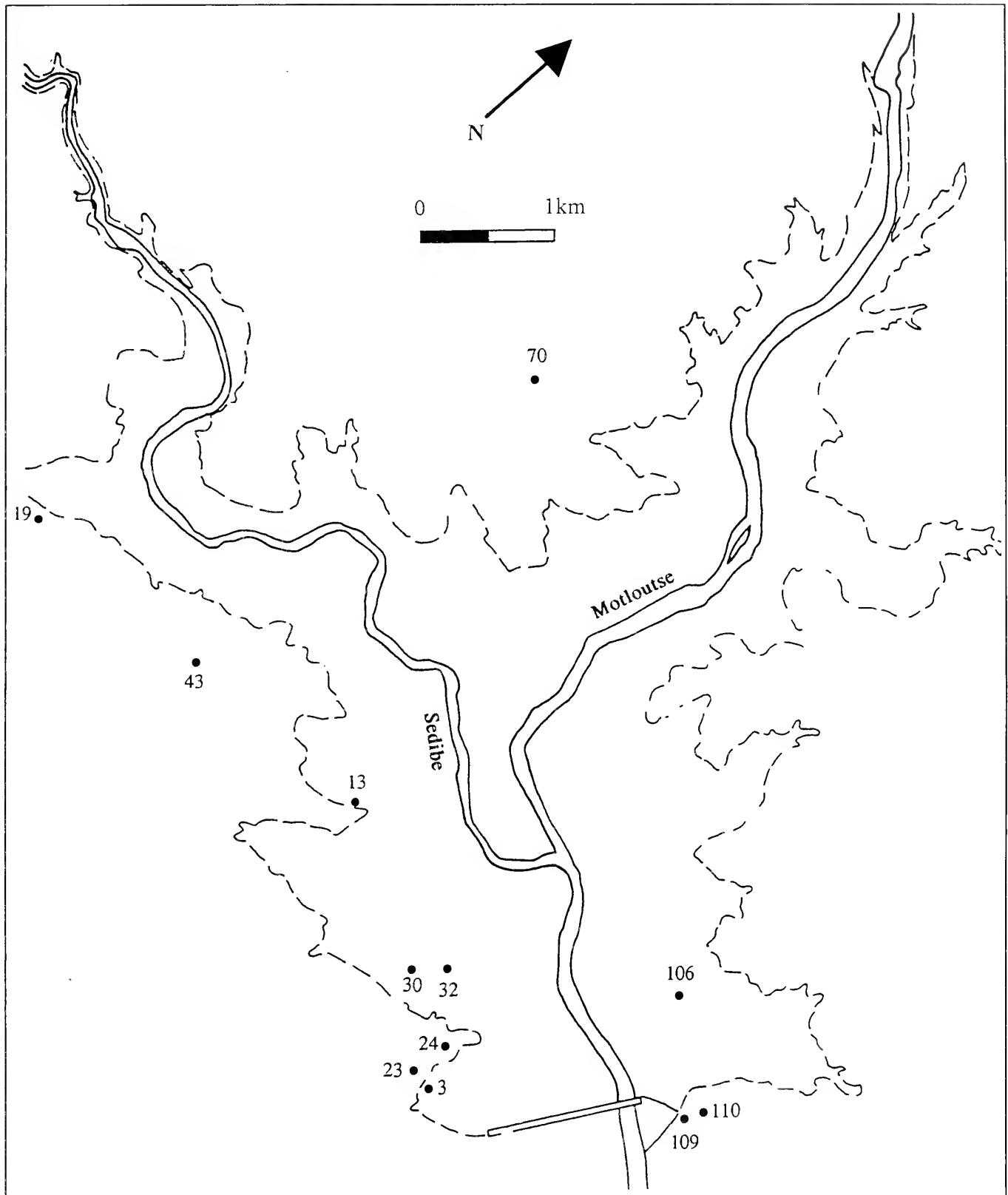
Ceramic groups need to be defined by their complete list of multidimensional types. Nevertheless, certain key features may be particularly useful in the field to identify assemblages. In the case of Zhizo, incised and stamped bands on the lower rim and a stamped line on the shoulder are diagnostic features (Huffman 1974; Robinson 1966).

The Phase I surveys found five sites with this pottery or other diagnostic artefacts, and six more were identified during Phase II (Fig. 4). One shelter also contained Zhizo pottery. Initially, five other sites were thought to be a variant, called Zhizo B, but they were later reclassified as Moloko (Campbell *et al.* 1955).

Of the 11 sites identified as Zhizo, four received Phase II mitigation, while one (Site 109) was extensively tested because of its proximity to the dam wall. Although charcoal was scarce, four sites could be radiocarbon dated.

Site	Lab No.	a.d.	Cal AD
19	Beta 29951	850±50	970-1020
30A	Beta 81196	730±50	790-950
106	Beta 80095	590±50	665-770
109	Beta 80984 (AMS)	730±60	790-950

Whatever the precise dating, the Phase I and II investigations revealed a fairly widespread Zhizo occupation. Although Zhizo settlements were fairly common, the Phase II testing produced only small amounts of pottery, no substantial middens and little bone. From this evidence, it would appear that short term shifting cultivation and a rather low population density characterised the Zhizo period.



**Fig. 4. Zhizo sites recorded in the project area.**

The Zhizo sites within the project area were all located at the base of hills and set back at least 300 m from the Motloutse and Sedibe rivers. In addition to pottery, characteristic indications of Zhizo occupation included concentrations of pole-impressed daga. These rubble heaps were at first interpreted as huts, but excavations at Site 109

suggested that they were probably granaries. Following interpretations of similar Early Iron Age granaries elsewhere, the Phase II report suggested that the floors had been purposefully fired.

Despite the well-preserved daga concentrations, many of the sites were severely eroded. Whether or not this erosion



Fig. 5. Site 30B from hillside showing excavations in progress. Note daga concentration marked by arrow.

was a long-term consequence of the Zhizo occupation, it was clearly important to an understanding of the sites and their environmental history. Team 1 pursued this question at Site 30B where a large erosion gully bisected the archaeological remains.

In the case of Site 30B, previous investigations also noted an extensive group of stone granary platforms partly overlying the Zhizo occupation with both sealed and surface concentrations of daga. In addition to its erosion history, this site was selected for Phase III mitigation because of its potential for well-stratified pottery samples and organic remains. Team 1 spent four days at Site 30B, beginning on June 11.

#### SITE 30B (17DC30B)

The site (21.51.01S 27.42.07E) abutted the southeastern foot slopes of a low rocky hill, approximately 1 km due south of the Motloutse and Sedibe confluence. Site 30B was part of an extensive and more-or-less continuous distribution of archaeological remains encircling several hills.

The hills themselves form a northeast-trending alignment of porphyroblastic granite gneiss that extends for approximately 5 km on either side of the Motloutse River. Dense tree growth was concentrated on the more inaccessible slopes, while the mainly mopane woodland surrounding the hills showed evidence of severe coppicing

and a well-developed browse line. Scrub and secondary mopane less than 5 m in height dominated the site (Fig. 5). Associated trees and shrubs included various acacias, as well as dichrostachys, grewia and combretum species. Sheet, rill and gully erosion had caused the exposure of tree roots and the isolation of stones and boulders on pedestals.

Figure 6 shows the topography of the site and the location of the archaeological features visible at surface. The granary foundations identified during the Phase II investigation had a somewhat irregular distribution and may belong to different occupations. Some, such as those at the southern end of the site, were contiguous with exposed daga floors that the Phase II investigation assigned to the initial Zhizo occupation.

These floors may belong to huts or granaries. Other stone granary foundations, including those at the foot of the hill, are possibly younger and could be associated with either the Moloko or Khami pottery recovered from the Phase II test pit. The erosion gully across the site was clearly younger than the daga floors although its relation to the more recent features was uncertain.

#### Method and Stratigraphy

Team 1 excavated a series of 1 x 3 m trenches along a 50 m transect and a series of random test pits (Fig. 6) to resolve the stratigraphic relationships of these different components, as well as to investigate the erosion history of the site.

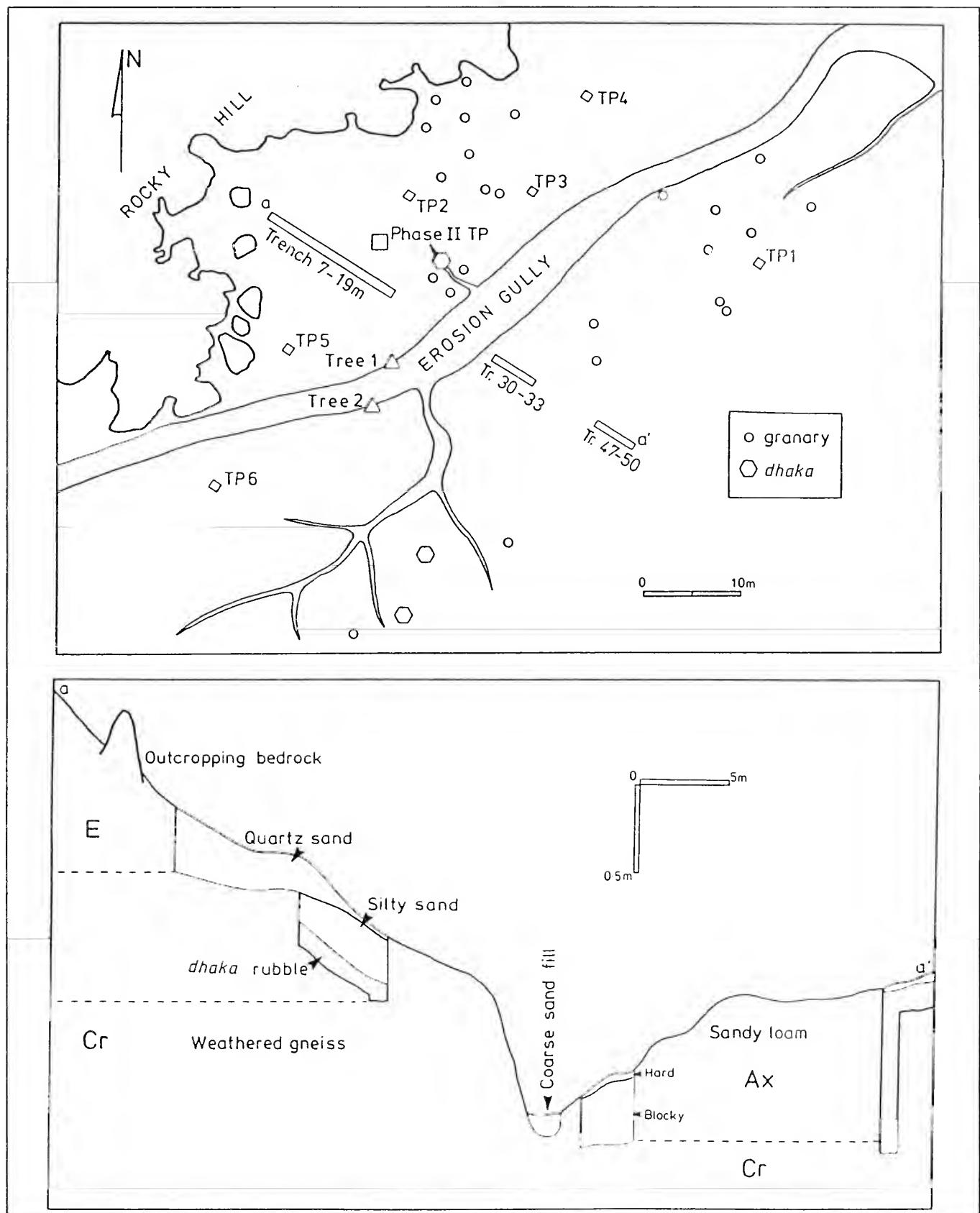
Trench 7-19 had a surface cover of loose sand constituting an E horizon (layer 1) that appeared to be a skeletonized soil derived from the hill above. The sediment was pinkish-grey (7.5 YR 6/2) and comprised angular to sub-angular grains, mainly of quartz. The surface sloped away from the hill at 1:2, and the depth of the soil decreased from 50 to 40 cm below surface over the same distance.

A second layer of fine silty sand, similar in colour (7.5 YR 5/2 - 7/2) occurred in Trench 14-19 between 5 and 20 cm. This overlay a large concentration of daga rubble (layer 3) associated with Zhizo pottery lying between 20 and 40 cm. Small quantities of flaked stone, including pieces of hydrothermal vein quartz and silcrete, indicate a possible pre-Iron Age occupation of the same surface.

In Trench 14-19 layer 3 overlay an easily recognized sub-surface Cr horizon (layer 4) of light brown (7.5 YR 6/3 - 6/6) weathered gneiss. The smaller fraction ( $\leq 125\mu\text{m}$   $\phi$ ) of this material comprised sub-angular and sub-rounded grains of quartz and spar as well as some biotite. Clay particles adhered to grains in the size fraction  $\leq 90\mu\text{m}$   $\phi$ , suggesting that the material as a whole was in primary pedogenic context rather than redeposited. The more mobile silt and clay fraction, however, could have been removed by sheet erosion.

This stratigraphy can be summarised as follows:

Layer 1: E-horizon, pinkish-grey (7.5YR 6/2) loose sand comprising angular to sub angular grains, mainly of quartz. It occurred in Trench 7-19 from 5 to 40 cm below surface;



**Fig. 6. Site 30B, map (redrawn from Phase II report) and profile of trench transect.**

Layer 2: pinkish-grey (7.5YR 5/2-7/2) fine silty sand between 5 and 20 cm in Trench 14-19;

Layer 3: daga rubble between 20 and 40 cm in

Trench 14-19;

Layer 4: subsurface CR-horizon, light brown (7.5YR 6/3-6/6) weathered gneiss.

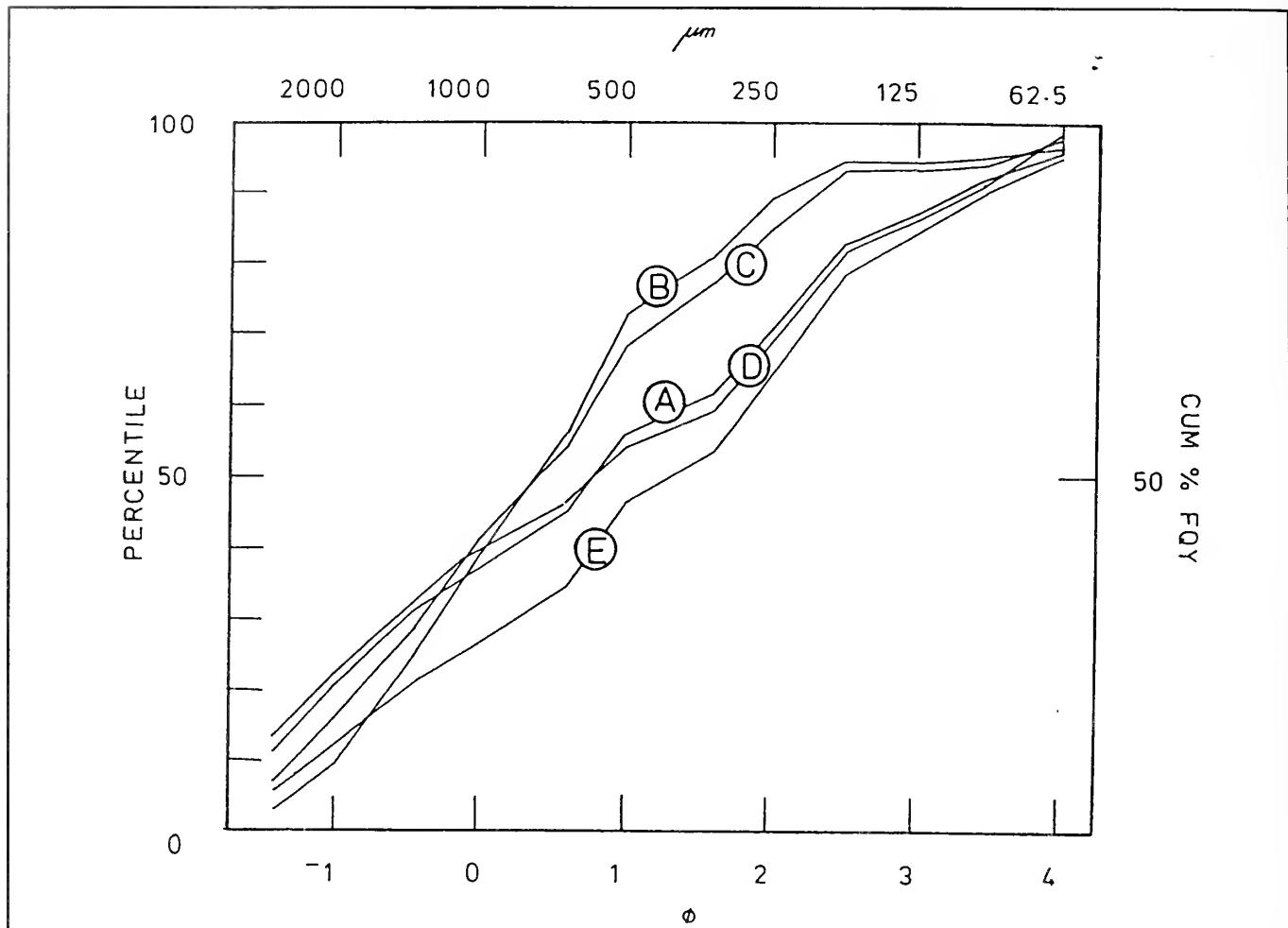


Fig. 7. Site 30B, granulometric analyses for Test Pit 2: Sample A = basal gneiss sand; Sample B = erosion gully fill; Sample C = sandy loam from Trench 47-50; Sample D = surface sand from hillside footslope; and Sample E = pinkish white sand from Test Pit 4.

Further down slope, the loose sandy overburden gave way to a hard surface of compacted sandy loam constituting an Ax horizon. This sandy loam represented the general soil conditions of the area as a whole. The upper 5 cm of the sandy loam was brown (7.5YR 5/2) and while relatively hard, it lacked the massive, blocky texture of the underlying material that was dark grey (7.5YR 4/1) and archaeologically sterile. The weathered gneiss Cr horizon appeared in Trench 47-48 at 90 cm. The stone granary foundations and daga floors in the eastern and southern parts of the site were coeval with the upper 5 cm of the sandy loam. Given the evidence of sheet and gully erosion, it is likely that the surface of this horizon had been considerably reduced, and this probably accounts for the general paucity of archaeological remains.

The sandy loam horizon was deeply incised by an erosion gully in Trench 27-29, containing a loose fill of light brown (7.5YR 6/4) coarse sand with isolated crumbs of daga and small chips of silcrete and quartz, all presumably derived from the upstream erosion of archaeological deposits. Sub-rounded quartz grains showing some surface polish, as well as grains of biotite and calcrete, dominated the smaller fraction of the erosion gully fill ( $\leq 125\mu\text{m} \phi$ ). The fill material resembles that of the weathered

gneiss horizon, although it could equally well be derived from the sandy loam adjacent to the gully.

Test Pits 1, 3, 5 and 6 revealed grey sandy loam resting on reddish yellow (7.5YR 6/6) decomposing gneiss. The upper layer of Test Pits 2 (15-35 cm) and 4 (0-60 cm) contained the middle layer of pinkish-white sand noted in Trench 7-19.

The distribution of diagnostic pottery shows that Moloko occurred in layer 1 in Trench 7-19 above Zhizo in layer 3. Furthermore, an archaeologically sterile layer separated the two occupation horizons.

In Test Pit 2 the pinkish-grey soil 15 to 35 cm below surface appears to correspond to the 'ashy' soil described in the Phase II investigation. However, the Test Pit 2 soil had the same colour and sandy composition as the sterile interleaving horizon found in Trench 14-19. The material lacked any trace of charcoal flecking, and there was no evidence of oxidation due to burning. While the presence of an ashy component overlying the Zhizo occupation was therefore not confirmed, similar pinkish-white (7.5 YR 8/2) material comprised the upper 60 cm of the deposit in Test Pit 4. This too was lacking archaeological materials and seems to indicate a fairly extensive non-archaeological horizon separating the Zhizo and Moloko components. It is

possible that this deposit was at least partly aeolian in origin.

### Soil Analyses

The cumulative percentage frequency graphs (Fig. 7) present a granulometric analysis of five soil samples. In this diagram, Sample A, from the basal decomposed gneiss in Test Pit 2, has a similar profile to Sample D from the ground surface at the site datum. Thus, the parent materials and weathering processes were the same throughout the archaeological sequence. Likewise, Sample B, from the sandy fill of the erosion gully, has a similar profile to Sample C from the grey sandy loam in Trench 47-50. The gully fill was therefore probably derived from the same material as the sand fraction of the sandy loam that in turn was also derived from the decomposition of the gneiss parent material. On the other hand, Sample E, from the pinkish white sand in Test Pit 4, differs from the previous four. This material was ultimately derived from the same parent material as the others although aeolian processes may have reworked it.

Sample	Derivation	Skewness	Kurtosis
A	decomposed gneiss	0.0471	1.4954
B	gully fill	0.3224	1.5710
C	grey sandy loam	-0.3208	1.9312
D	surface sand	0.2803	2.3180
E	pinkish white sand	0.7498	2.8441

The negatively skewed distribution for Sample C reflects the presence of a fine fraction and indicates that the material had not been subject to fluvial reworking. Sample A similarly reflects a primary pedogenic deposit, whereas Samples B and D are more positively skewed, probably due to fluvial reworking. Sample E, the most positively skewed, appears to have been sorted in favour of fine sand between  $125\mu\text{m}$  and  $250\mu\text{m}$   $\phi$ , the general size range of aeolian transported sand.

### Finds

Little archaeological material was present. This paucity of pottery and bone was probably the result of severe sheet erosion, particularly on the eastern side of the main erosion gully. On the western side, the ground sloped steeply away from the hill, and most surface material had probably been eroded away. As a consequence, the number of finds is too low for detailed analysis.

### Bone

Animal bone came from four of the trenches and one of the test pits. Trench 10-13 at 0-20 cm yielded two cervical vertebrae (? C6), as well as a scapula and a longitudinally split medial tibia from a small antelope (size class I). Trench 13-16 at 0-30 cm yielded a small sample of undiagnostic bones, possibly bovid size class IV (*cf. cattle*), as did the 20-50 cm level in the same trench. Trench 16-19 at 15-30 cm produced fragments of a longitudinally split humerus, as well as fragments of miscellaneous vertebrae and a mandibular premolar, all of bovid size class IV (*cf.*

cattle), together with the distal epiphysis of a metatarsal of bovid size class I. Trench 30-33 at 20-25 cm yielded a single upper molar (m1) of bovid size class IV (*cf. cattle*). Test Pit 2 yielded a small number of undiagnostic bones. A fragment of freshwater mussel shell came from Trench 13-16 at 35-40 cm.

The presence of cattle bone in association with both Moloko and Zhizo material is to be expected. The bones assigned to bovid size class I probably belong to small antelope such as bushbuck.

### Stone Artefacts

The sample of stone artefacts from Trench 10-13 at 0-20 cm included one flake and one core reduction chunk in hydrothermal vein quartz, as well as one utilized flake in chalcedony (cryptocrystalline silicate). The same trench also yielded a single fragment of graphite schist that was probably used in pottery decoration. In Trench 13-16 at 0-30 cm stone artefacts included one flake, two core reduction chunks and one microlithic core in vein quartz, two microlithic core fragments in crystalline quartz and one MSA (?) artefact with LSA retouch. Artefacts from Trench 16-19 in the upper 5 cm included eight flakes, 18 core reduction chunks and five core fragments, all in vein quartz. At 5-15 cm there were 13 flakes, 21 core reduction chunks and five core fragments, all in vein quartz.

### Ceramics

In the total excavation there were some 11 diagnostic Moloko and three Zhizo sherds, plus four undiagnostic rims and 345 undiagnostic body sherds (Table 1).

### Fired Daga

The large quantities of daga plaster provided an opportunity to test the hypothesis that the floors were purposefully fire-hardened before use. Team 1 retained a sample of 29 daga fragments in a single compact layer from Trenches 13-16 and 16-19, at 20-50 cm and 15-30 cm respectively. The pieces were irregular, bearing impressions of thin poles in parallel or lattice pattern on one or both sides (Fig. 8). The fabric of the material was coarse and sandy, but well fired. Most pieces evidently came from walls that had been constructed as a light wooden framework and then thickly plastered. Some, however, were floor pieces.

The mean thickness of the plaster, measured from the outer surface of the pole impression to the outer surface of the plaster, was 24.48 mm (SD 6.45; n=29). The mean thickness of the poles, measured across the pole impression, was 31.89 mm (SD 9.46; n=29). The lack of a correlation between the thickness of the plaster and the thickness of the poles ( $r = 0.0224$ ) suggests that the daga walls were relatively uniformly thick. This, together with the positioning of the structures close to the foot of the hill and the quantity of material, further suggests that these are the remains of granaries rather than huts.

The plaster was applied as puddled mud and therefore preserved good casts of the wooden framework. A number of pieces contain casts of *Colophospermum mopane* poles

Table 1. Distribution of ceramics at Site 30B.

Unit	depth (cm below surface)	undecorated	rims	Zhizo	Moloko
Trench 10-13	0-20	49	2	-	4
Trench 13-16	0-20	34	1	-	-
	20-50	33	-	1	-
Trench 16-19	0-5	-	-	-	-
	5-15	28	-	-	-
	15-30	55	-	-	2 (?)
Trench 30-33	0-15	-	-	-	-
	15-20	14	-	-	-
	20-25	4	1	-	-
Trench 47-50	0-5	1	-	-	-
	5-10	2	-	-	-
	10-15	-	-	-	-
	15-20	-	-	-	-
Test Pit 2	0-20	62	-	-	1 (?)
Test Pit 3	0-20	17	-	-	3
Test Pit 5	30 cm	15	-	2	-
Test Pit 6	-	2	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>345</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>

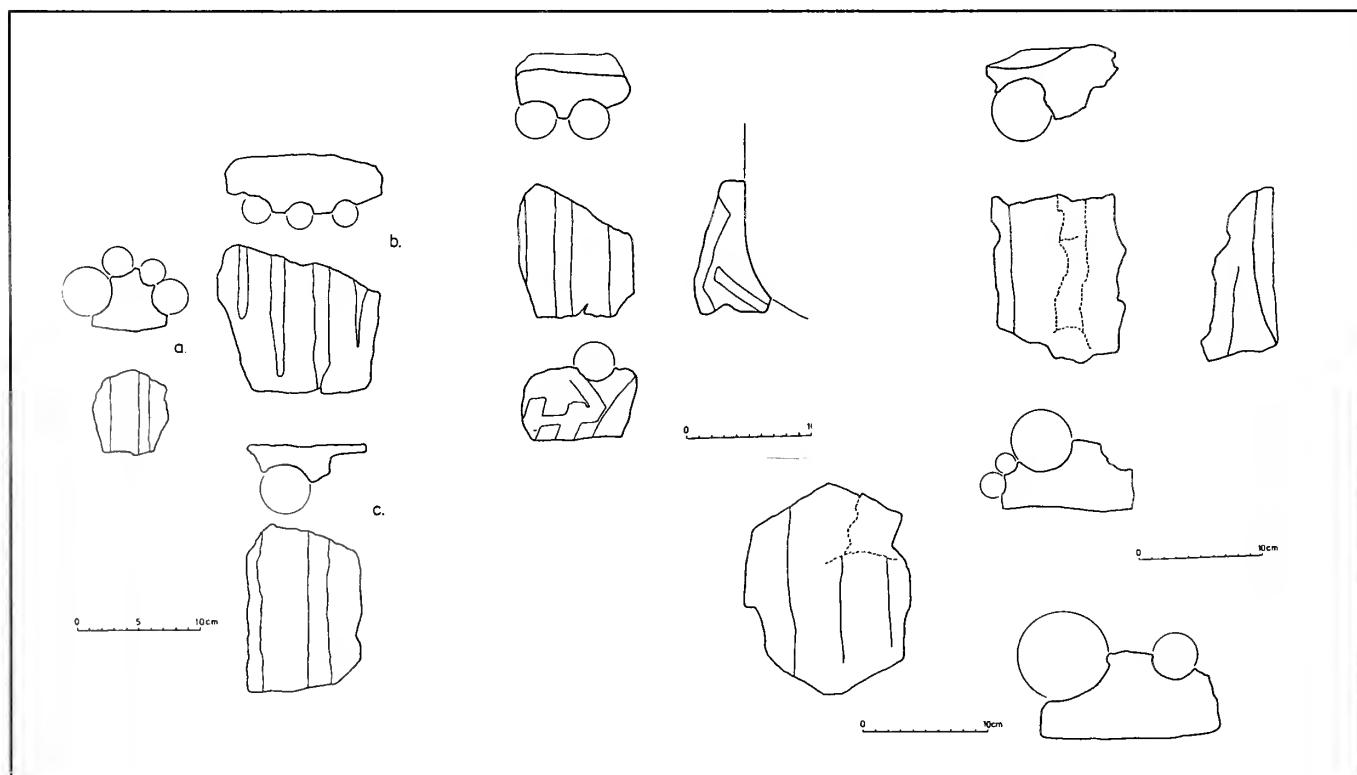


Fig. 8. Site 30B, fragments of daga: left, upper wall from Trench 16-19, 15-30 cm (a) and Trench 13-16, 20-50 cm (b and c); upper centre, lower wall from Trench 16-19, 15-30 cm, showing bark lashings; upper and lower right, lower wall or floor from Trench 13-16, 20-50 cm.

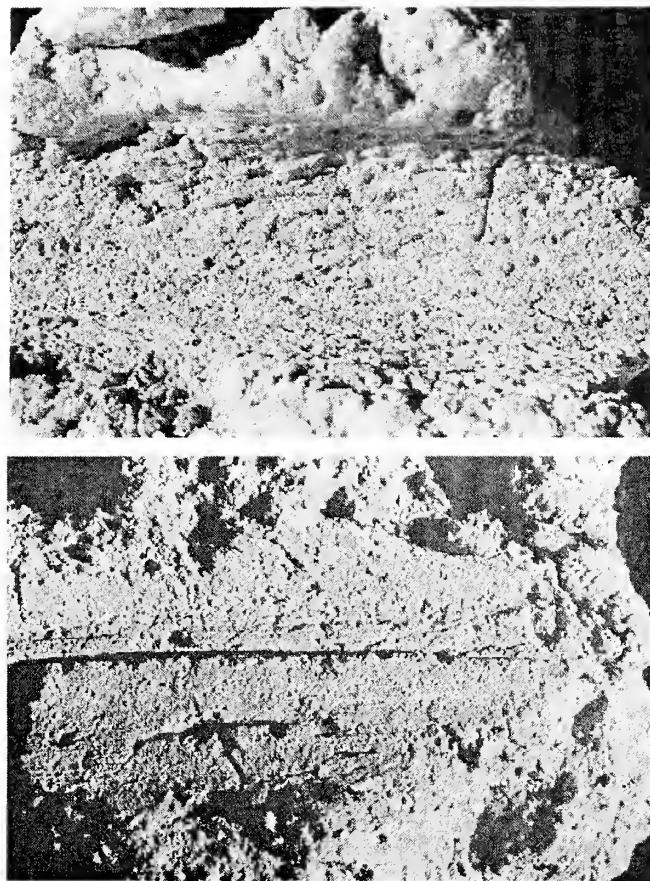


Fig. 9. Site 30B, impressions of mopane (above) and grewia (below) in daga fragments.

(Fig. 9). Under normal circumstances smooth bark with very small evenly spaced irregularities characterises first year mopane growth, while second year and older growth exhibits a characteristic pattern of short densely spaced longitudinal splits resulting from the increasing girth of the branch. With this criteria the mopane poles correspond to second year growth: coppiced trees near the settlement could have provided this material.

The other identifiable species is *Grewia flavescentis* (Fig. 9): the bark has fluted ridges and the larger branches have roughly square sections (Coates-Palgrave 1977:571). *G. flavescentis* is a large shrub that could not provide the right poles for hut construction, and this point further supports the identification of these structures as granaries. Casts showing long parallel grooves might not always belong to *G. flavescentis*, however, for it is possible to produce the same effect by forcing a pole into wet plaster. There are several examples where this appears to have happened, presumably when the poles were too far apart to support the weight of the plaster on their own.

There is also evidence of a thin bark lattice. This would have been necessary to help hold the plaster and maintain the shape of the structure. This lattice, together with evidence of shrinkage cracks, further confirms that the plaster was applied as puddled mud (see Larsson & Larsson 1984 with reference to contemporary Tswana building practices).

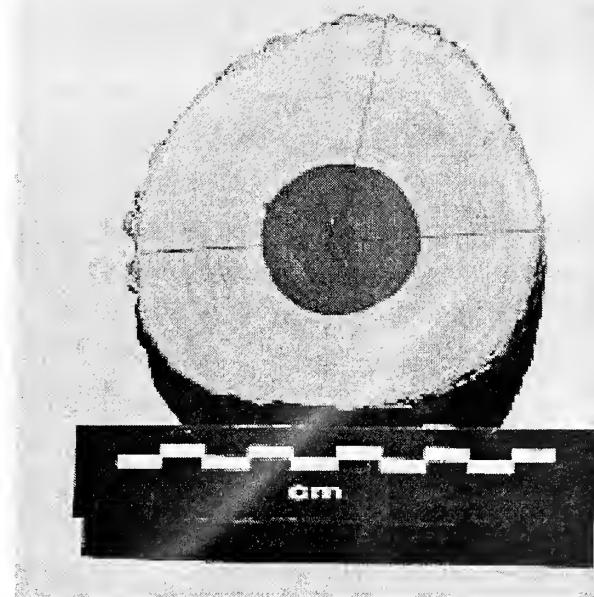


Fig. 10. Site 30B, *Colophospermum apiculatum* specimen showing root exposure (above) and stem section (below).

The previous investigators believed the granary floors were purposely fired to improve protection against insects and rodents. The evidence from the present excavation does not support this view. In particular, the plaster covering on

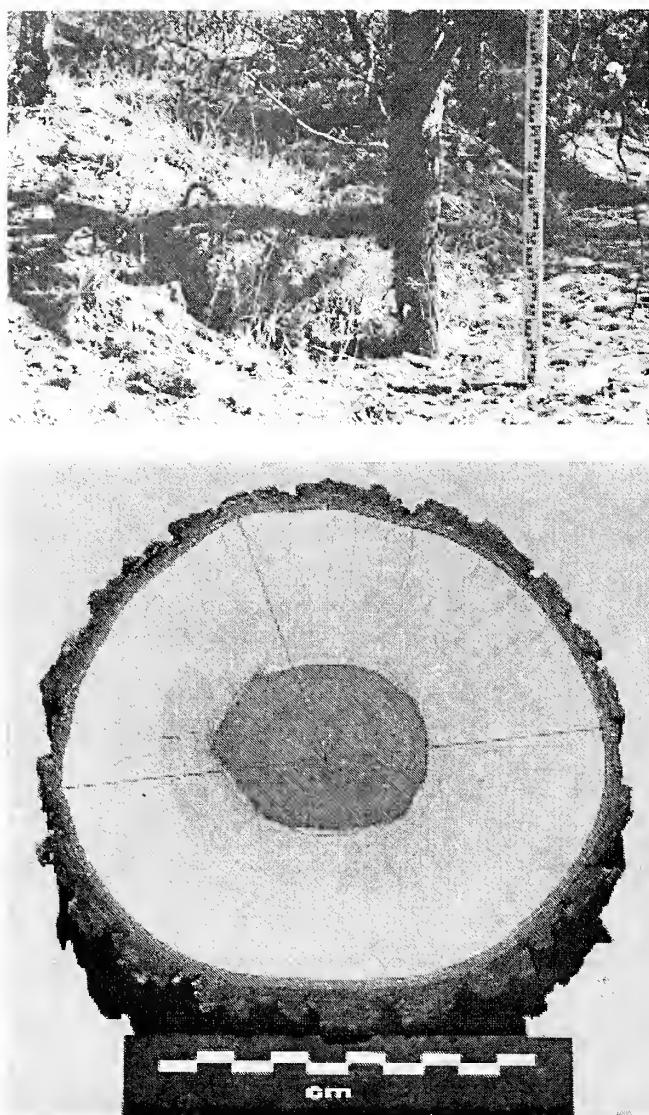


Fig. 11. Site 30B, *Colophospermum mopane* specimen showing root exposure (above) and stem section (below).

top of the framework would create a reducing atmosphere with visible blackening. As it is, the evidence indicates a rich oxidizing atmosphere (rosy pink colouration within the casts). The most likely way in which this could have occurred is by firing *after* the granaries had collapsed into a loose (and therefore well aerated) heap of dry poles, thatching material and rubble.

#### Erosion History

The two trees selected for dendrochronological analysis in the central gully both had acute root exposure. Tree 1—the *Combretum apiculatum* specimen (Fig. 10)—had a stem diameter of 88 mm (range 87–90 mm) just above the basal flare. Maximum root exposure was 500 mm. Growth rings represented a probable age of 19 years, with 11 growth rings confirmed for over 100° of circumference. This translates into an estimate of 26.3 mm/y<sup>-1</sup> root exposure during the life of the specimen.

Tree 2, the *Colophospermum mopane* specimen (Fig. 11), had a stem diameter of 136 mm (range 129–143 mm) just above the basal flare. Maximum root exposure was 550

mm. Growth rings represented a probable age of 19 years, with eight growth rings confirmed for over 150° of circumference. This translates into an estimate of 28.9 mm/y<sup>-1</sup> root exposure during the life of the specimen. Bearing in mind the inherent inaccuracies of the method and the unsuitability of the species, the estimate of less than 20 years of gully erosion is reasonable.

The rapid head-ward advance of this gully is well illustrated by the desiccated remains of an extensive algal mat some 150 m south. Such mats can only develop in shallow standing water, and once dried, the hooves of livestock obliterate them before the next rainy season. In this instance the gully head had cut through the algal mat within the year and advanced more than 30 m further.

#### Preliminary Discussion

Without independent dating, we assume that the Zhizo component of the site falls within the known range of dated Zhizo sites elsewhere. Furthermore, it is reasonable to suggest that the site was occupied at more or less the same time as Site 30A, and formed part of a cluster of homesteads grouped around the hills. According to the available dating and the known ceramic sequence, the homesteads would have been abandoned by the late 10th century AD.

The stratigraphic separation of the Zhizo and Moloko components of the site is clear. This hiatus may correspond to the cool/dry period that set in after AD 1300, and lasted until about AD 1425. Whether the suspected aeolian horizon marks this period of aridity cannot be asserted on the research results alone. Significantly, the intervening deposit is not ashy, as previously suggested, and does not represent an occupation horizon.

One reason for the stratigraphic uncertainty is the recent history of erosion. The present study distinguished the accumulation surface at the foot of the hill from the deflation surface on the eastern side of the erosion gully, where sheet erosion had washed away all except stone emplacements and daga floors. The development of the gully was quite recent. The gully has apparently developed on one of several cattle tracks running more-or-less parallel in the near vicinity; and so, the erosion probably corresponds with the major settlement expansion at Mmadinare.

It should be noted, however, that vegetation clearance within the reservoir basin for the dam itself had probably accelerated the advance of this and other gullies in the region. This advance will undoubtedly continue with the seasonal fluctuations of the water level, affecting other archaeological sites outside the study area.

The settlement hiatus after the Zhizo period is one of the interesting research results of the Letsibogo investigations. We turn now to the next period of settlement.

#### LEOPARD'S KOPJE AND KHAMI

The same ceramic types as the preceding Great Zimbabwe phase characterized Khami, with the addition of tall-necked jars decorated with contrasting black and red incised panels and bands (Robinson 1959, 1961). Previous

investigations recorded some 45 sites with Khami pottery in the project area (Fig.12). Whatever else, this number shows that the area was highly suitable for agropastoralism during this period. These sites ranged from a district centre with a stonewalled palace (Site 70), to smaller platforms representing royal headmen (Sites 16 & 46) to commoner sites (e.g., Sites 79B & 86). The Phase II teams test excavated 20 suspected Khami sites and radiocarbon dated five.

Site AD	Lab No.	a.d.	Calibrated
4	Beta 80979(AMS)	1470 ± 60	1425-1485
38	Beta 80980	1850 ± 50	1825-1935
79B	Beta 80982	1500 ± 50	1420-1505
86	Beta 80983	1400 ± 70	1400-1445
110	Beta 80985	1580 ± 90	1455-1660

Cattle kraals appeared to be concentrated at elite sites although in other respects the commoner settlements conformed to the Central Cattle Pattern. In terms of interaction the Khami sites appeared to be contemporaneous with Moloko, and two (Sites 79A and 79B) were close neighbours. Pottery samples also needed to be increased, and so nine Khami and Moloko sites were chosen for further mitigation. We report on Site 86, the 119 Complex and Site 38.

Besides the Khami sites, Phase II archaeologists discovered Site 125. Preliminary investigations yielded a radiocarbon date of AD 1240 ± 60 (Beta 80986) calibrated to AD 1285 to 1390. The radiocarbon date led the Phase II teams to suspect that the site belonged to the Leopard's Kopje cluster and that it represented an isolated reoccupation of the area before the Khami period. A substantial cattle kraal and numerous granary bases increased the potential for meaningful data, and Team 1 selected Site 125 for further mitigation.

### Site 125 (17DC125)

The site (21.48.57S; 27.43.07E) lay approximately 600 m east of the Motloutse. The layout consisted of a central stock enclosure surrounded by a rough arc of stone granary foundations on the slightly raised eastern side (Fig. 13). Preliminary Phase II work included mapping all surface indications and excavating two test pits. Furthermore, Phase II investigators recorded a total of 39 granary foundations. In both size and number these exceeded most other sites in the Letsibogo basin. While this evidence points to abundant harvests, such as would be expected at the time, the apparent isolation of the site required explanation.

A Phase II test pit in the stock enclosure indicated that it was at least 35 cm thick. There seemed to be some doubt, however, concerning the formation processes involved in this accumulation. The Phase II report suggested that particulate material resembling comminuted dung was in fact fine calcrete. A horizon of what appeared to be nodular calcrete lying beneath the dung deposit was thought to have resulted from the downward percolation of cattle urine.

Team 1 designed the Phase III investigation to clarify the stratigraphy and to better understand the formation processes involved in the accumulation of the livestock enclosure and other components of the deposit.

### Description

Site 125 lay on the south side of a narrow tributary stream with high, thickly wooded banks. This strip of riparian bush was continuous with the denser, broader band of forest flanking the Motloutse itself. At the confluence of these two watercourses an outcrop of metaquartzites formed a natural weir running almost perpendicular to the Motloutse. As a result, large quantities of impounded water lay close to the surface, protected from evaporation by the overlying alluvial sand.

An outcrop of gneiss and calc silicate dominated the landscape west of the site (Fig. 14). A few small shafts on the hilltop appear to have been mines (Site 90 in the Phase II report). Mineralisation was not obvious, however, and their dating context is entirely unknown. Nevertheless, they are worth noting because their existence influenced initial hypotheses about Site 125.

Several erosion gullies originated from this outcrop. From the outcrop towards the site, the ground surface was densely covered in stony rubble and incised by complex braided channels indicating advanced sheet erosion of an already skeletonized soil. This was in contrast to a slight doming of the surface towards the site which showed little sign of erosion: there were no incised channels; the archaeological features were relatively intact; and the soil surface showed some organic content in comparison to the leached and highly compacted surface of the surrounding soil.

Westward for about 60 m the soil shows progressively more severe sheet erosion and incision of braided drainage channels. The ground sloped gently at about 1:10 towards a shallow but well developed erosion gully. Evidently, the gully was quite mature because it had a rounded profile and supported a fringe of well-established trees and bushes. A horizon of nodular calcrete was exposed in the bank of the gully at 30 cm. About 50 m further to the west lay the narrow tributary stream. This major erosion feature had developed on a geological fault. Its banks were 4 to 5 m and almost vertical, indicating active erosion. This erosion had exposed a horizon of nodular calcrete at 2 m.

Considering the evidence of soil erosion in the immediate vicinity, it would appear that the survival of archaeological remains was mainly due to location and chance.

### Method

Team 1 excavated a series of eight staggered 3 x 1 m trenches in a transect across the site (Fig. 13). The first, easternmost trench was expanded to cover 4 x 3 m, while a 1 x 1 m test pit was excavated at the western end. Several more trench sets were excavated in parallel to these, and a further set ran at right angles to the transect on the western side. In addition, the team clarified the outlines of a few features.

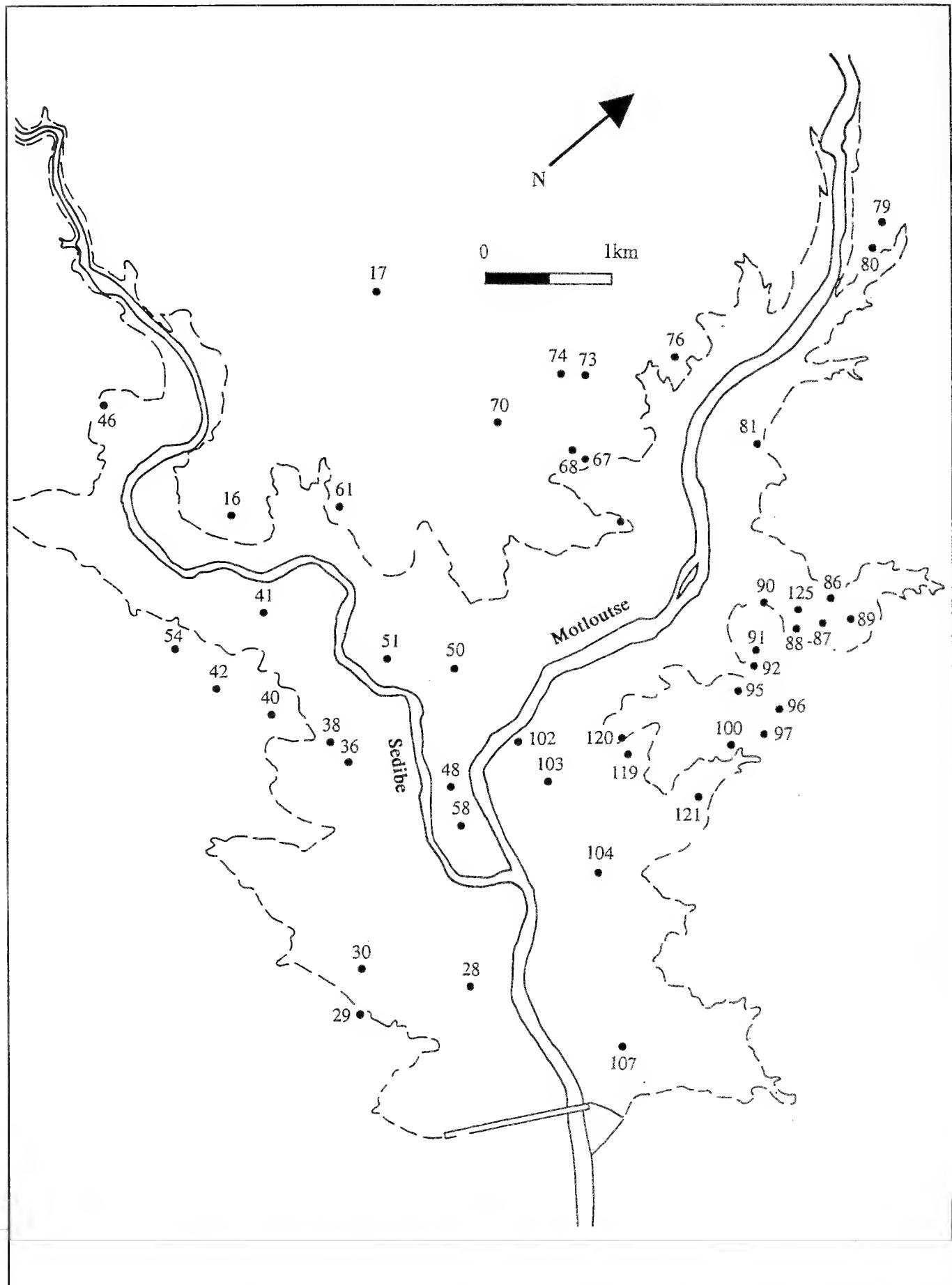


Fig. 12. Khami sites recorded in the project area. Note that Site 4 and 110 were later reassigned to Letsibogo Moloko.

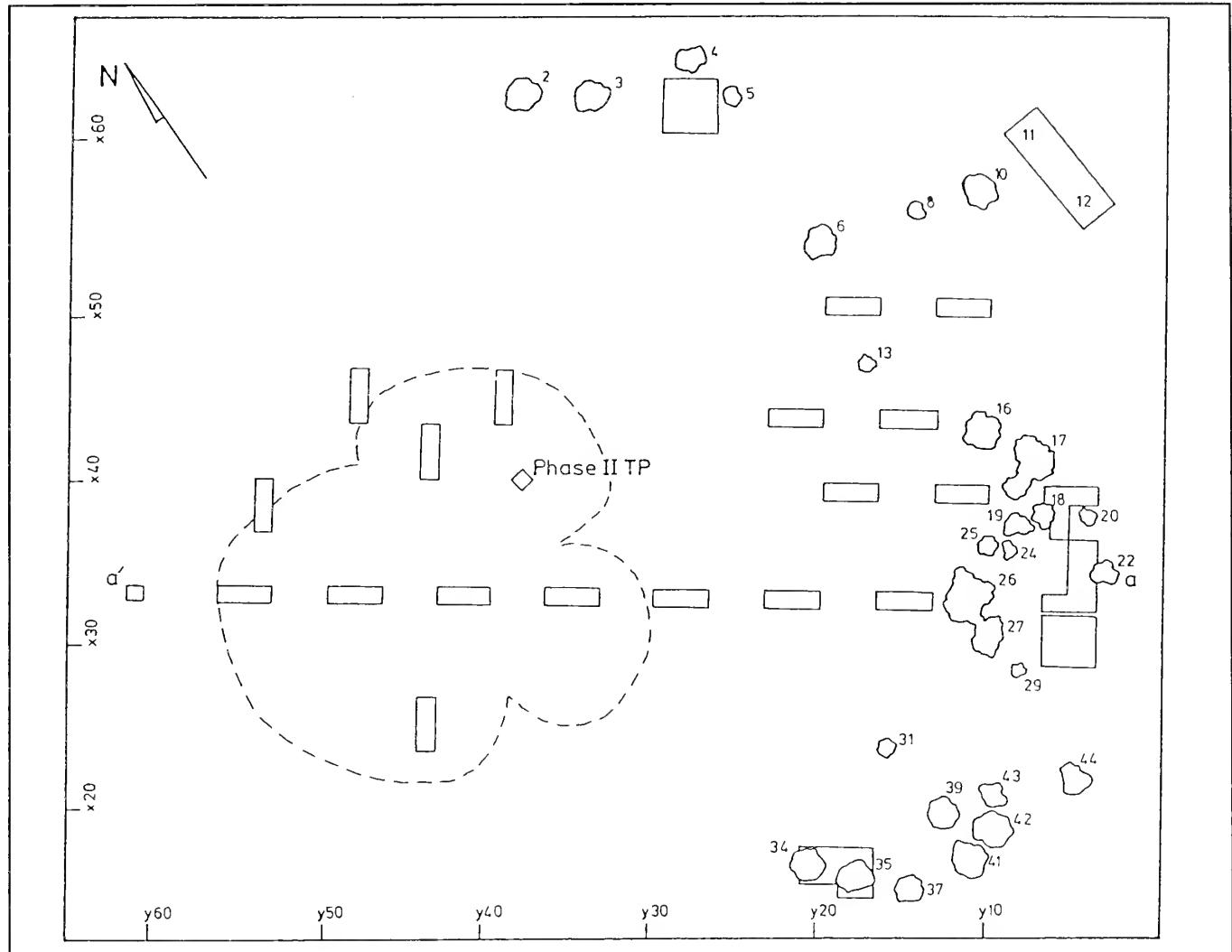


Fig. 13. Site 125, map: broken line marks kraal.

### Stratigraphy

In Trench y30x34 the upper 5 cm, or Oi/Ec horizon (layer 1), graded almost imperceptibly into a brown (7.5 YR 5/3) coarse ashy sand (layer 2) with a slight reaction in 5% HCL. This material constituted an Ad horizon, with a consistent admixture of ashed plant material and comminuted dung, indicating a livestock enclosure (Fig. 15). At its easternmost extension in this trench the dung horizon overlay a primary layer of the sandy loam Ax horizon (layer 3) that in turn overlay a Bcn horizon of nodular calcrete at 80 cm (layer 4). This Bcn horizon was almost certainly continuous with the nodular calcrete found in the Phase II test pit and in the erosion gully.

Excavations in Trenches y42x34, y48x34 and y54x34 showed a steady decrease in the thickness of the Ec horizon (layer 1) and confirmed that it was dispersed from the slightly higher eastern end by sheet erosion. No rills were visible on the surface of this horizon. The Ec horizon overlay the Ad or dung horizon (layer 2), the lower limits of which varied between 30 cm and 50 cm, thus repeating the observations from the Phase II test pit.

Although the dung layer was not rich in artefact material, small quantities of bone and pottery appeared in

all trenches. Bone from this layer showed a degree of rounding and abrasion consistent with trampling in a coarse matrix. The test pit at y61x34 revealed an undisturbed continuation of the Ax horizon, resting on nodular calcrete, and thus established the spatial limits of the dung layer.

Trench y9x34 was situated among stone granary foundations at the eastern end of the site. The upper 5 cm, comprising an Oi horizon (layer 1), was a strong brown (7.5 YR 4/6) loose sandy soil with some partly decomposed organic material. The soil colour remained the same beneath the surface, grading into a hard sandy loam Ax horizon (layer 3) rich in archaeological remains, but undisturbed beneath 12 cm. Thus Trench y9x34 had only two layers.

These basic soil conditions also characterized Trenches y18x34 and y24x34, with some variation in colour (7.5 YR 4/4 - 4/6) and texture, indicating a slightly skeletonized clayey sand, or Ec horizon (layer 1). The depth of soil containing archaeological remains (layer 3) increased to 30 cm, but the abundance of material decreased steadily over the 15 m covered by these three trenches.

The basic stratigraphic profile of the site (Fig. 15) was thus a superficial Oi horizon grading down slope into a



Fig. 14. Site 125, excavations in progress. Note approximate location of mine shaft (above) and kraal deposit (below in foreground).

slightly skeletonized Ec horizon (layer 1). This in turn tapered out at the lower end of the site where the surface material belonged to the Ax horizon (layer 3) which elsewhere underlay the Oi and Ec horizons. The stock enclosure deposit formed a discrete Ad horizon (layer 2) on top of the sandy loam. Underlying the Ax horizon (layer 3) throughout the site was the nodular calcrete Bcn horizon (layer 4).

#### Granary Area

The Phase II report described the 39 granaries. Charcoal from the new excavation has been radiocarbon dated to a.d.  $1430 \pm 40$  (Pta-7774), which calibrates to AD 1420 to 1445. We return to the significance of this result in the preliminary discussion of the excavations.

The team also investigated two small arcs of upright stones (Fig. 16) in the granary area. In the Phase II report these arcs were considered as whimsical structures perhaps built by children. The excavations did not confirm this interpretation, but raised instead the possibility of furnaces. Although slag, ore or other evidence of metallurgy was not found in direct association, such evidence occurs on site. The ore suggests the villagers smelted copper here. The small amount of debris suggests these two features were secondary furnaces. Because these two features were similar in size, they may represent the optimum dimensions for use with a single bellows.

#### Hut Area

In terms of the normal spatial pattern associated with Late Iron Age sites, the granaries were positioned behind

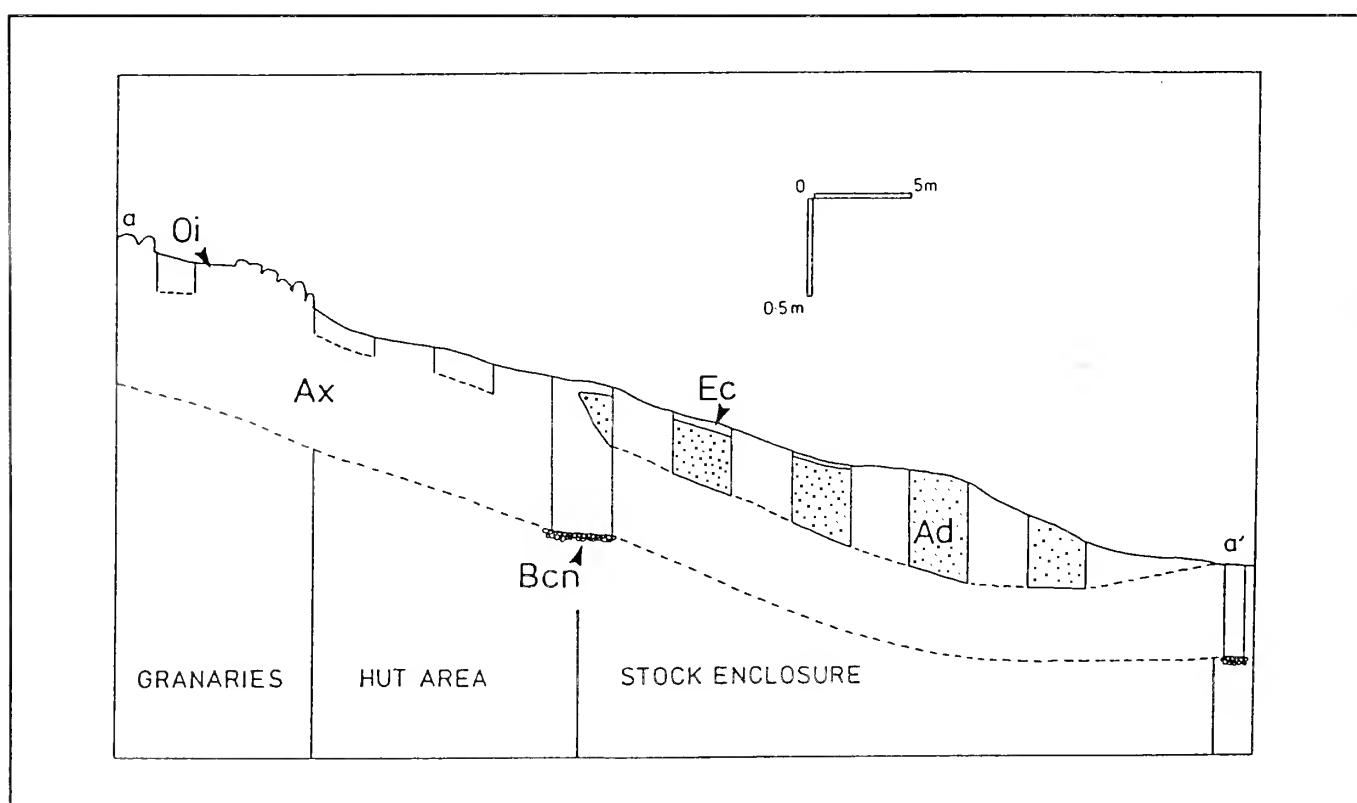


Fig. 15. Site 125, stratigraphic profile. Note reversed orientation compared to site plan.

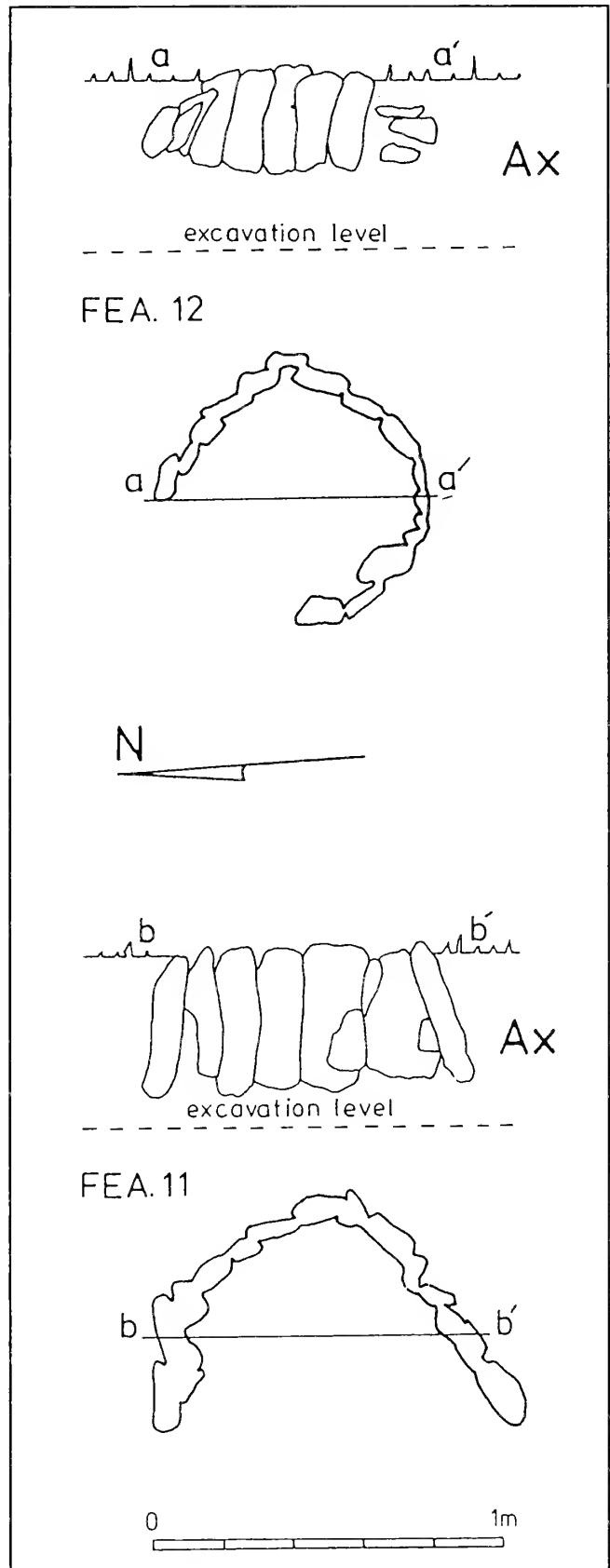


Fig. 16. Site 125, plan and profiles of Features 11 and 12.

the huts. On this site, however, the trench transect revealed no direct evidence of huts. To confirm these expected spatial relations, it was necessary to consider some additional lines of evidence.

Cumulative percentage frequency graphs present a granulometric analysis of five soil samples: three from the site and two comparative samples (Fig. 17).

A	offsite, 50 m east	0.4268	1.8833
B	suspected hut area	0.4718	2.1709
C	above stock encl.	0.1453	1.7852
D	stock enclosure	0.5094	2.5663
E	comparative daga	-0.4716	1.7066

Sample A differs markedly in its profile from Sample B, collected in the hypothetical hut area midway between the granaries and the stock enclosure. Sample C from the up-slope limit of the stock enclosure and D from the centre of the stock enclosure both resemble the offsite sample (A) rather than the sample from the hypothetical hut area (B). There is, however, a close match between Sample B and Sample E, derived from a supply of fresh daga prepared by a local villager. Thus, while the hypothetical hut area yielded no conventional evidence of hut construction, the granulometric characteristics of the soil suggest that it probably consisted of desegregated daga from collapsed huts.

The distribution data further supports this interpretation. The only negatively skewed sample (E) reflects the presence of a fine fraction, including clay particles, such as would be desirable for building purposes. According to local practice, termite hills are the best source for making daga. The more positive skewing of the other samples probably reflects the loss of the fine fraction through sheet wash. In this regard it is noteworthy that Sample C shows the greatest negative skewness, from immediately down slope of the hypothetical hut area.

### Kraal Area

The stock enclosure had a lobate rather than circular shape, suggesting to Phase II investigators that animals were kept in segregated compartments. Among the most likely reasons for such subdivisions is the separation of calves from lactating cows, and/or the separation of cattle from small stock. However, there were no traces of the enclosure fence, its entrance, or postholes. To clarify their function, the three lobes were sampled for spherulites.

The sediment sample from the largest, down slope lobe of the stock enclosure contained some phytoliths but no spherulites. Sediment samples from the remaining two lobes also contained some phytoliths, but the northern lobe (where the Phase II test pit was excavated) contained some spherulites. Since there were only a few, the possibility cannot be eliminated that cattle were kept there.

### Soil Analyses

Soil nutrient measurements provide further data to support the spatial interpretation and to clarify the formation processes at the site.

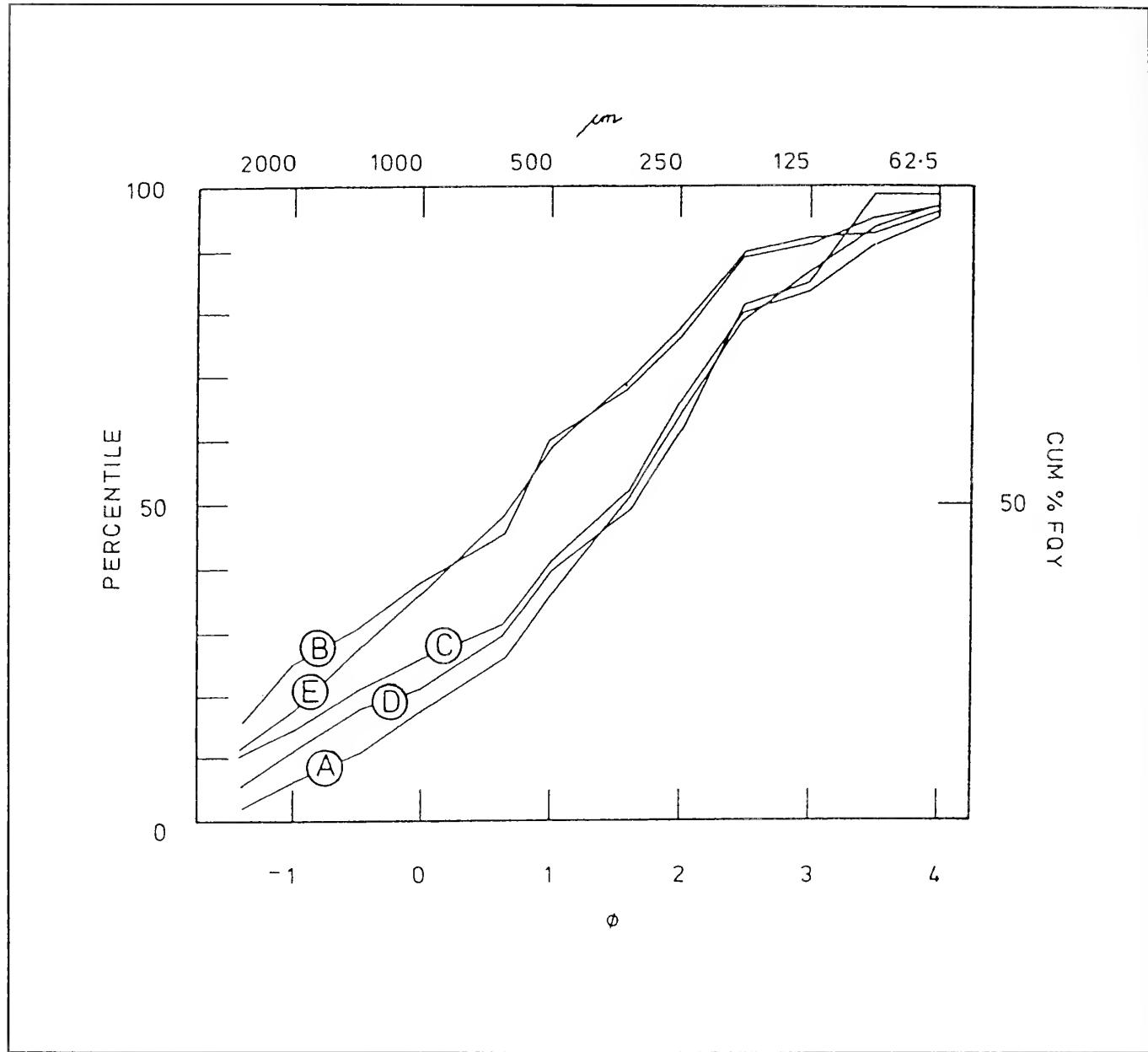


Fig. 17. Site 125, granulometric analyses: Samples A = sand from off site; Sample B = hut area; Sample C = between huts and kraal; Sample D = kraal; Sample E = daga plaster.

Sample point	PO <sub>4</sub> mg/l	NO <sub>2</sub> mg/l	NO <sub>3</sub> mg/l
y42x43	65	0.8	6.0
y45x57	4	0.7	11.0
y18x44	1	1.6	3.0
y45x41	69	1.0	7.0
y45x47	58	2.0	5.0
y22x20	45	1.5	12.0
y24x34	31	0.7	16.0
y36x34	70	0.8	7.0
y18x34	21	1.2	17.0
y61x34	13	1.2	12.0
y54x34	93	0.9	12.0
y9x34	12	1.1	13.0
y48x34	84	1.0	8.0
y30x34	79	0.7	7.0
offsite	5	0.8	5.0

Figure 18 presents the soil nutrient measurements for the trench transect line. The background orthophosphate PO<sub>4</sub> level is almost 20x lower than the level for the stock enclosure. This anomaly is also clearly limited, and it is therefore possible to define the limits of the enclosure on this basis alone. This anomaly is probably the result of a kraal fence. Orthophosphate levels up to 6x background up slope of the stock enclosure probably results from a number of factors, including the spillage of dung beyond the fence, as well as the use of cattle dung as a binding agent in daga, and the decomposition or burning of roofing thatch.

Furthermore, the distribution of soil nitrogen (NO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>3</sub>) values contrast with the distribution of the orthophosphate. Whereas the stock enclosure is marked by a definite PO<sub>4</sub> anomaly, soil nitrogen levels within the same area are only slightly above background. Up slope however,

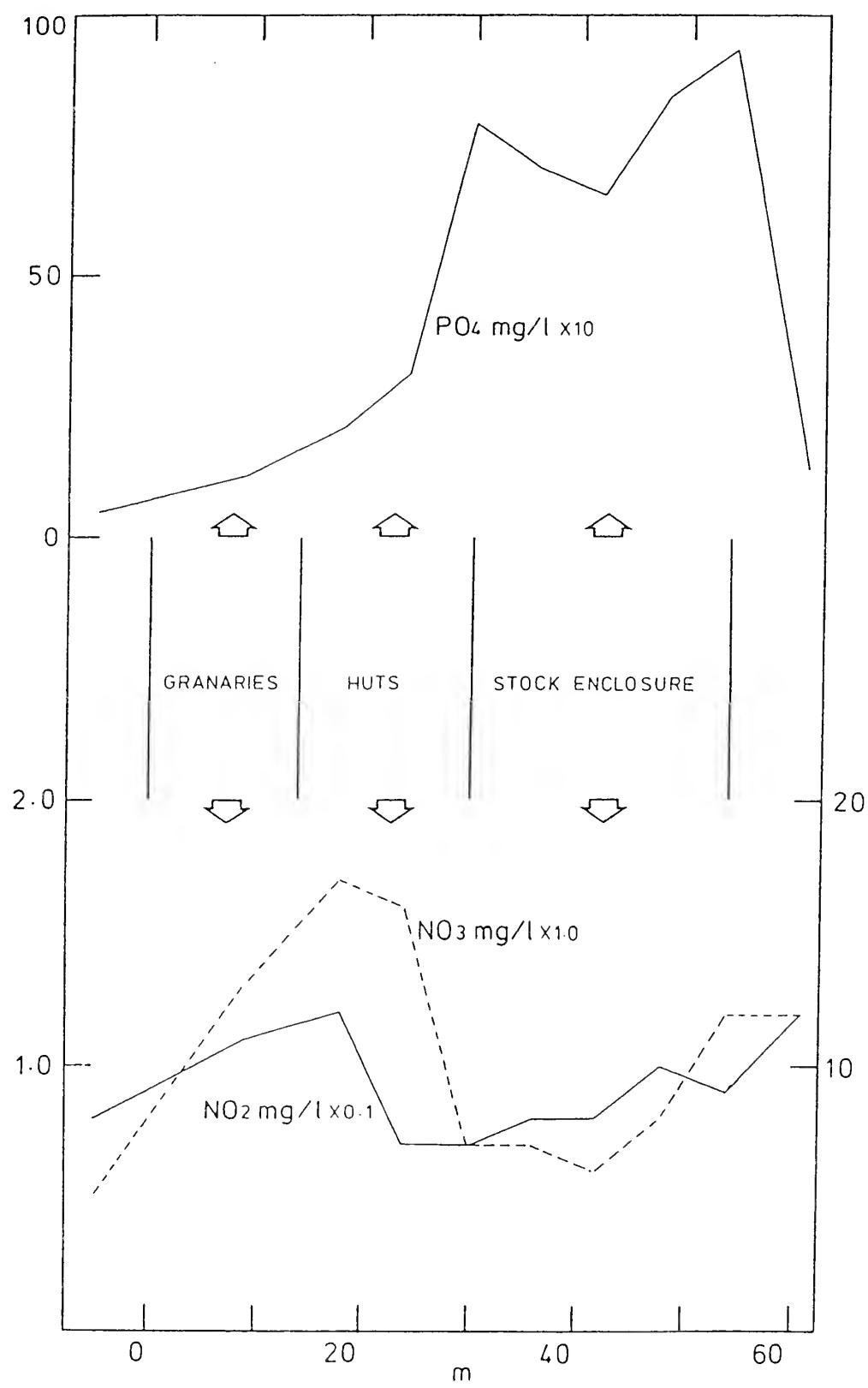


Fig. 18. Site 125, soil nutrient analyses from sample transect.

particularly in the suspected hut area, soil nitrogen levels are up to 5x the background. The soil nitrogen levels drop suddenly at the down slope limit of the hut area, although they increase once more at the down slope limit of the stock enclosure.

The high soil nitrogen levels in the hut area probably reflect the concentration of wood and thatch in the huts, as well as cooking fires. Thus, while the stock enclosure orthophosphate anomaly reflects the concentration of nutrients consumed from outside the settlement, the soil nitrogen

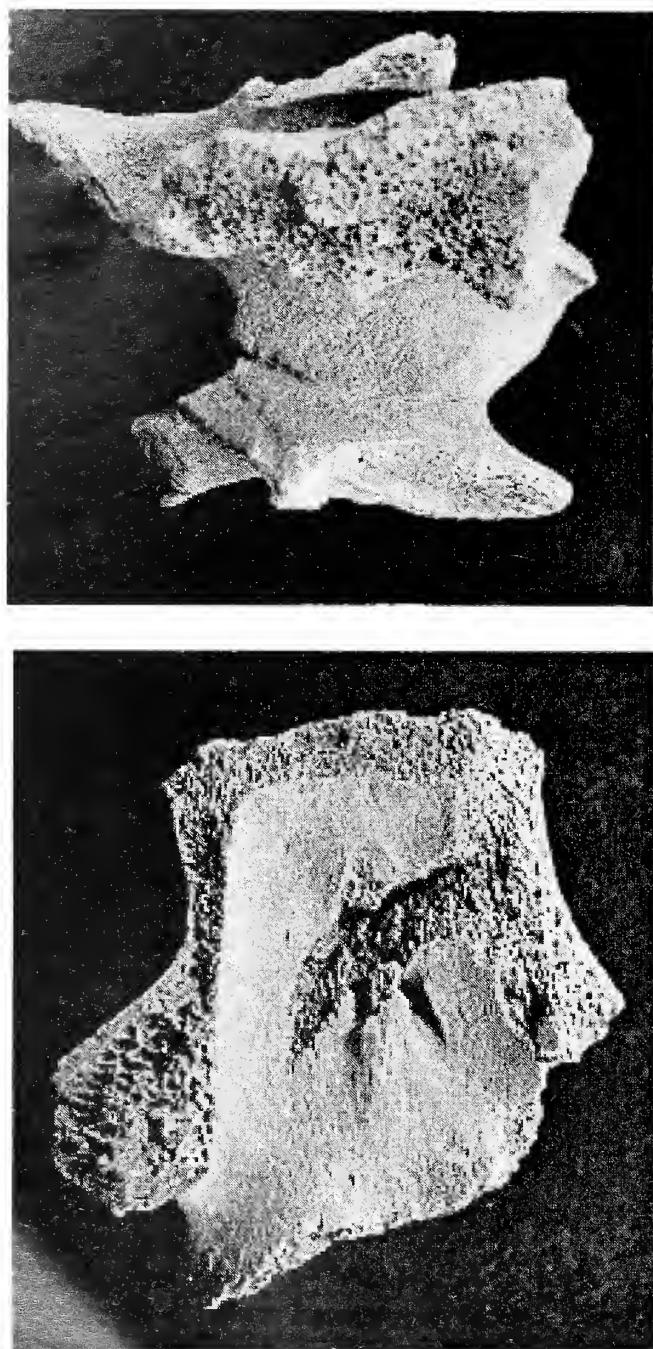


Figure 19A. Site 125, cattle vertebra showing axe marks.

anomalies reflect the concentration of plant material used inside.

On the basis of the evidence presented so far, the site can be divided into three basic spatial components: the the granary area (A), with 45m<sup>2</sup> of excavation<sup>1</sup>; the hut area (B), with 27m<sup>2</sup> of excavation<sup>1</sup>; and the stock enclosure (C), with 25m<sup>2</sup> of excavation<sup>1</sup>. These three spatial components form the contexts for the following descriptions.

#### Find

##### Bone

Small quantities of fragmented animal bone came from all excavation trenches, with most from the granary area (A), followed by the stock enclosure (C) and then hut area

(B). A total of 111 identifiable diagnostic bones came from four of the five trenches in the granary area, as well as five of the nine in the stock enclosure and three of the ten in the hut area. Table 2 presents the species list based on both NISP (number of identifiable specimens per taxon) and MNI (minimum number of individuals per taxon).

Table 2. Faunal taxa from Site 125, Areas A-C (NISP/MNI).

Taxa	A	B	C	Totals
<i>Reptilia</i>				
unid. Snake		1/1		1/1
tortoise cf. <i>Geochelone</i>		2/1		2/1
<i>Aves</i>				
unid. gamebird		1/1		
<i>Mammalia</i>				
unid. rodent	1/1			1/1
hare cf. <i>Lepus</i>		5/1		5/1
<i>Procavia capensis</i>	6/2	2/1		8/3
unid. Bovid size class I	1/1		1/1	2/2
<i>Ovis aries/Capra hirca</i>	3/2	2/1	3/1	8/4
<i>Bos taurus</i>	9/1	2/1	2/1	13/3
unid. Bovid size class IV	38/1	3/1	18/1	59/3

There was some exploitation of game animals, including tortoise, hare, hyrax, small antelope, and gamebirds. These hunted animals were all small species that were probably brought to the site intact. The consistently higher NISP values for the domestic bovids indicate that these animals were also probably butchered on site. Local butchery ensured the survival of the numerous bones lacking marrow (e.g., carpals, tarsals, phalanges). In the case of bovids, species identifications were based on cranial material. Despite the small range of taxa, post-cranial elements were identified only as far as size classes. The likely presence of impala that could be confused with domestic sheep/goat requires such cautious identification. Certain skeletal elements (e.g., calcaneus, metatarsus), however, are sufficiently different in size to be reliably diagnostic. In the case of the class IV material, it is similarly possible to confuse domestic cattle and buffalo. Table 3 lists specific identifications and shows that cattle were the main source of meat, with fairly heavy reliance on sheep/goat as well.

Most bone was recovered from the granary area (A). The representation of cattle was disproportionately high there, not in terms of MNI, but of NISP, thus indicating that the granary area was the primary locus of discard. The bone most probably came from the hut area where the meat was consumed. Significantly, a large proportion of the cattle bone clustered in one particular group of granaries at the highest point of the site.

The domestic animal bones provide some indication of butchery practices, not only in the distribution of skeletal elements, but through cut marks. Figures 19a & b show axe scars beneath the neural arch of the cervical vertebra, and most importantly, scars in the epiphyseal region of the

Table 3. Distribution of faunal skeletal elements, Site 125, Areas A-C.

	A	B	C
<i>Ovis aries/Capra hircus</i>	P <sub>1</sub> , P <sub>2</sub> , RM <sub>1</sub> P <sub>1</sub> , P <sub>2</sub> , P <sub>3</sub> , RM <sub>1</sub> M <sup>1</sup>	M <sup>3</sup> dp, M <sup>1</sup> , M <sup>2</sup> M frags.	M <sub>1</sub> (worn), M <sub>2</sub> , M <sub>3</sub> M <sup>3</sup> P <sup>3</sup> , P <sup>4</sup> , M <sup>1</sup> , M <sup>2</sup> , M <sup>3</sup> (erupting)
	distal humerus	tibia, distal (breadth of epiphysis cf. <i>Aepyceros</i> )	tibia, distal
	proximal radius-ulna 1st phalange (length cf. <i>Aepyceros</i> ) 2nd phalange, 2	3rd phalange, 1	astragalus (length cf. <i>Aepyceros</i> )
<i>Bos taurus</i>	P <sub>2</sub> , M <sub>1</sub> , M <sub>2</sub> , M <sub>3</sub> M <sub>1</sub>	M <sub>1</sub> , M <sub>2</sub> M frags.	P <sub>2</sub> dp, P <sub>3</sub> , P <sub>4</sub> , M <sub>1</sub> dp, M <sub>2</sub> dp, M <sub>3</sub> dp M <sup>3</sup> (root?)
	P <sub>3</sub> , M <sub>1</sub> , M <sub>2</sub> P <sup>3</sup> , P <sup>4</sup> , M <sup>1</sup> , M <sup>2</sup> , M <sup>3</sup> P <sup>3</sup> , P <sup>4</sup> , M <sup>1</sup> , M <sup>2</sup> P <sup>3</sup> , P <sup>4</sup>		
unidentified class IV	cranial fragments scapula, chopmarks pelvis, chopmarks femur, proximal femur, distal epiphysis radius-ulna, distal, 2 radius-ulna, proximal, 2 radius-ulna, proximal and medial tibia, distal 1st phalange, 4 2nd phalange, 5 3rd (terminal) phalange, 2 metacarpal, entire metacarpal, distal epiphysis carpals and tarsals: unciform, 2; scaphoid, 1; lunar, 3; navicular cuboid, 1 atlas vertebra cervical vertebra, chopmarks rib, mid-thoracic, proximal	scapula (chopmarks and tooth damage cf. dog) carpal/tarsal: navicular cuboid lumbar vertebra, neural arch/spine	cranial fragments occipital supraorbital arch scapula femur, distal radius, distal metapodial, proximal metapodial, entire metacarpal, proximal, 2 metacarpal, distal, chopmarks astragalus, chopmarks carpals and tarsals: navicular cuboid 2nd phalange 3rd (terminal) phalange, 3 thoracic vertebra, chopmarks lumbar vertebra

L=left, R=right, P=premolar, M=molar \*=upper, <sup>1</sup>=upper

metatarsus. The butchery process thus reduced the faunal assemblage in two stages: by the disarticulation of the carcase, and by splitting long bones for the extraction of marrow.

The bone assemblage was also subject to several post-depositional processes that further reduced the quantity of

material available for study. These processes favoured the more robust bones and particularly those without significant marrow. In addition some specimens bear superficial puncture marks that are consistent with canine incisors. Domestic dogs would not only reduce the assemblage by mechanical destruction but also by removing bones from

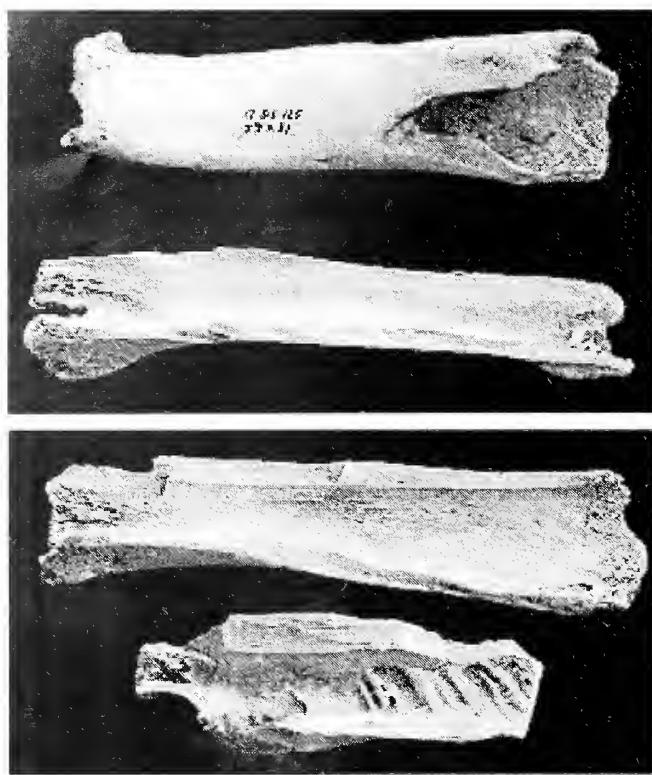


Fig. 19B. Site 125, cattle bones showing longitudinal splitting, spiral fracture and epiphyses removed.

the site. The same bone specimen also shows intricate surface etching from rootlets, indicative of a mildly acid soil. Although probably not sufficient to affect the overall character of the assemblage, there was a slight difference in soil pH, with the stock enclosure more alkaline than the granary and hut areas. Consequently, rootlet etching did not occur on the stock enclosure bones. Only a few specimens bear marks of rodent gnawing.

#### Metal Working

Tuyere end fragments, with some traces of surface glaze, as well as crucible fragments and what appears to be a small mortar came from the granary area. A small fragment of malachite ore was also found there. Slag, however, was scarce, and the only large piece was found at the down slope end of the stock enclosure. These objects were most likely associated with the two small furnaces.

#### Ceramics

Over 46 kg of pottery sherds were recovered, representing approximately 70 vessels. Most of the pottery was heavily fragmented, and little reconstruction was possible. The assemblage contains a preponderance of tapered rims, with some slightly flared or everted forms, as well as some examples of rim thickening (Figs 20 & 21). Semi-squared profiles also occur, and these appear to belong to exceptionally thick vessel bodies. Some vessels are jars with a clearly defined groove on the neck profile tends to be more strongly concave. Other rim profiles clearly belong to deep bowls. A total of 52 vessels could be assigned with reasonable confidence to specific shape categories (Table 4).

Table 4. Vessel shape distribution for Site 125, Areas A-C.

vessel shape	A	B	C	D	E
high-necked jar	21	1	1	23	44
globular pot	12	4	0	16	31
large storage pot	3	0	0	3	5.7
bowl	3	1	0	4	7.6
undetermined	6	0	0	6	11
<b>totals</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>52</b>	

The overall frequency of vessel shapes is biased in favour of the most utilitarian classes, including jars for beer drinking and globular pots for cooking. The large vessels used for storing water would have been few in number and seldom moved, hence their relative scarcity in the assemblage. On the basis of vessel shape and the limited decoration, this assemblage belongs to Khami, rather than Leopard's Kopje as proposed in the Phase II report.

The vessel numbers clearly decrease from the granary area (A) through the hut area (B) to the stock enclosure (C). Because the team excavated fairly similar amounts of each spatial area, the bias is not due to sampling. It would appear that broken pottery, as well as other debris was discarded beneath the granaries. Phase II excavations supports this observation.

Several other artefacts show the same biased distribution as the pottery. Spindle whorls, averaging 5 cm in diameter, indicate that cotton was spun here. Of the six examples found, five were from the granary area and one from the hut area.

#### **Preliminary Discussion**

A range of considerations, including access to reliable water supplies and arable soil, apparently determined the physical positioning of Site 125. Other advantages probably included wood for fuel and building timber, as well as ready access to suitable grazing. The near proximity of ancient workings would have also been a consideration.

The previous dating of the site supported the view that this was an isolated Leopard's Kopje settlement. However, our larger pottery sample shows that the assemblage belongs to the Zimbabwe/Khami cluster, and this is supported by the new 15th century radiocarbon date. Evidently, the older date is not associated with the site.

Apart from the new date and ceramic affinity, the orientation and layout of the major spatial components are significant, for they conform to the Central Cattle Pattern. The semi-concentric layout was based on the central position of the stock enclosure with an up slope arc of huts having a westward, down slope orientation. Behind the huts was an outer arc of granaries.

Our examination also provides some additional insights into the archaeological characteristics of this pattern at Site 125. For example, the visual identification of the stock enclosure was supported by high orthophosphate concentrations, and by the presence of plant phytoliths. The faunal

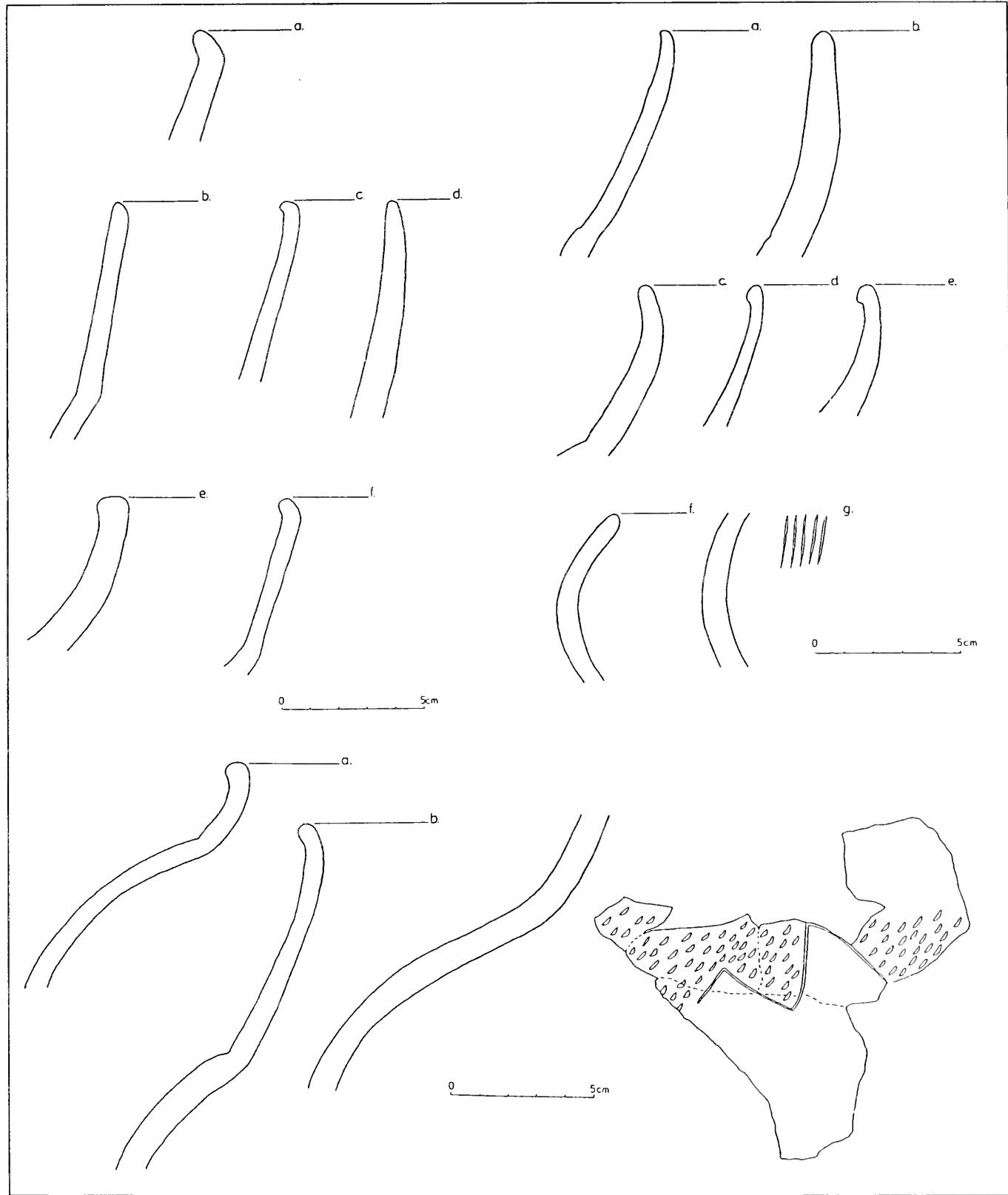


Fig. 20. Site 125, pottery: upper left from Trench y5x35, upper and lower right from y9x31, and lower left from y9x34.

evidence confirmed that both cattle and sheep/goats were kept in the settlement.

Furthermore, there was no visible evidence of huts. This situation was probably due to such factors as regular sweeping during the occupation of the settlement, the gradual removal of small mobile items by sheet wash and

the lack of burning. Instead of burning, the huts disintegrated to form an anthropogenic soil horizon. This investigation shows that the position of huts can be confirmed by granulometric characteristics of the soil, as well as by soil nitrogen anomalies.

The distribution of artefacts and faunal remains cast

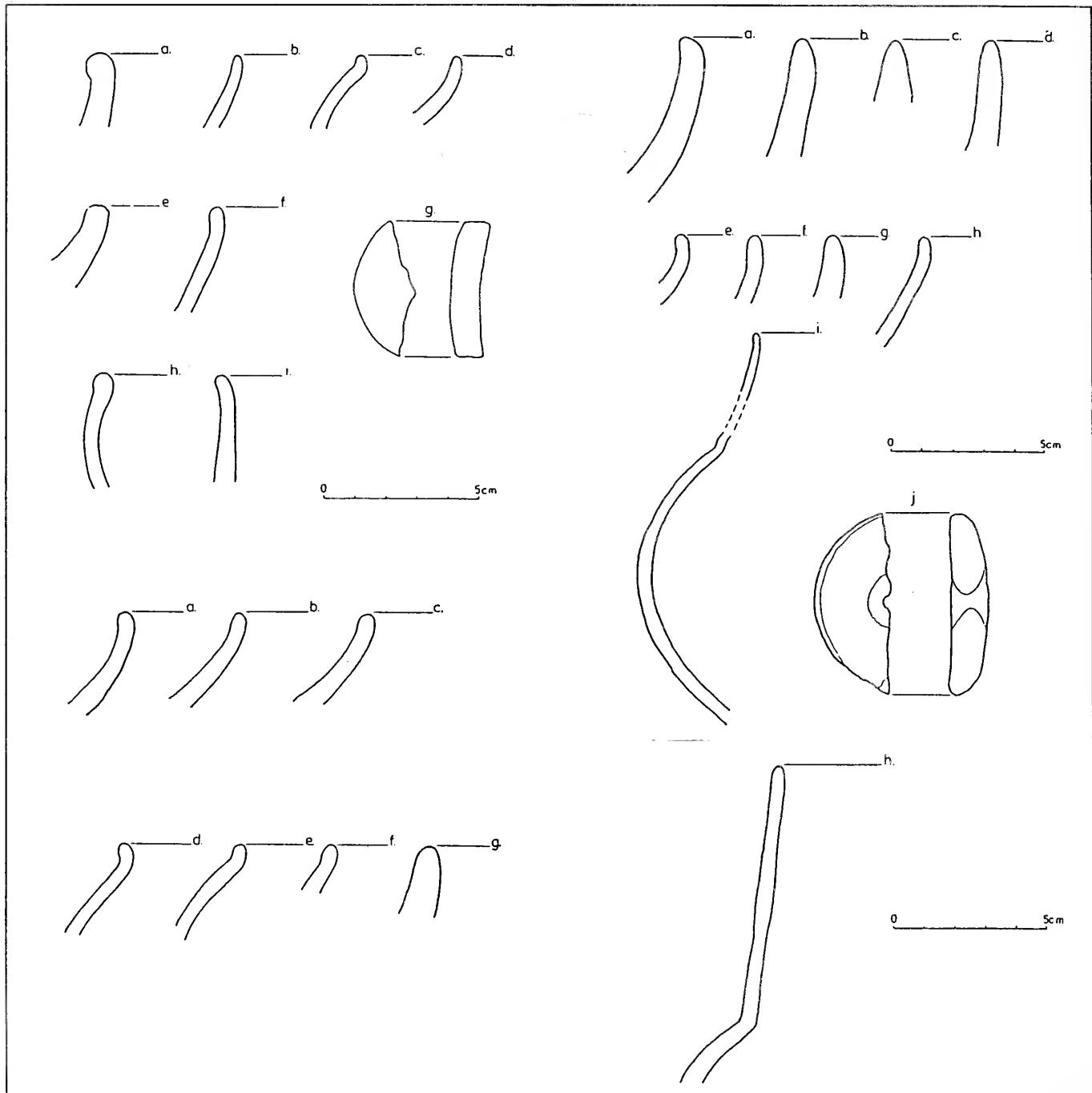


Fig. 21. Site 125, pottery: upper left various, upper right from y9x40 and lower left from y22x20.

further light on settlement organization. Pottery was heavily concentrated in the granary area, confirming that refuse from the hut area was deposited at the back of the site. The refuse accumulated around separate granaries, rather than in a communal midden. Despite the limited excavations, it is clear that the largest concentration lay at the highest point of the site in the middle of the granary arc; the only two decorated vessels came from this same area; most of the spindle whorls also occurred here; as were most of the evidence for metallurgy and most cattle bones. This uneven distribution of material probably reflects status differences among the inhabitants. More specifically, this was probably the refuse area for the homestead head.

Now that we know Site 25 belongs in the Khami period,

it can be meaningfully compared with other commoner sites. We now turn to Site 86.

#### SITE 86 (17DC86)

The remains of a highly eroded homestead (21.48.31S; 27.43.05E) lay on a narrow strip of land between two small tributaries about 300 m north of Site 125. Previous mitigation (Van Waarden) included the excavation of a shallow midden that produced a radiocarbon date of AD 1400  $\pm$  70 (Beta 80983). Further mitigation included recording some granary platforms, stone by stone, and more general mapping of the main features, including granary bases, middens and a possible cattle kraal.

It was the task of Team 2 to finish the mapping (Fig. 22),

## Site 86

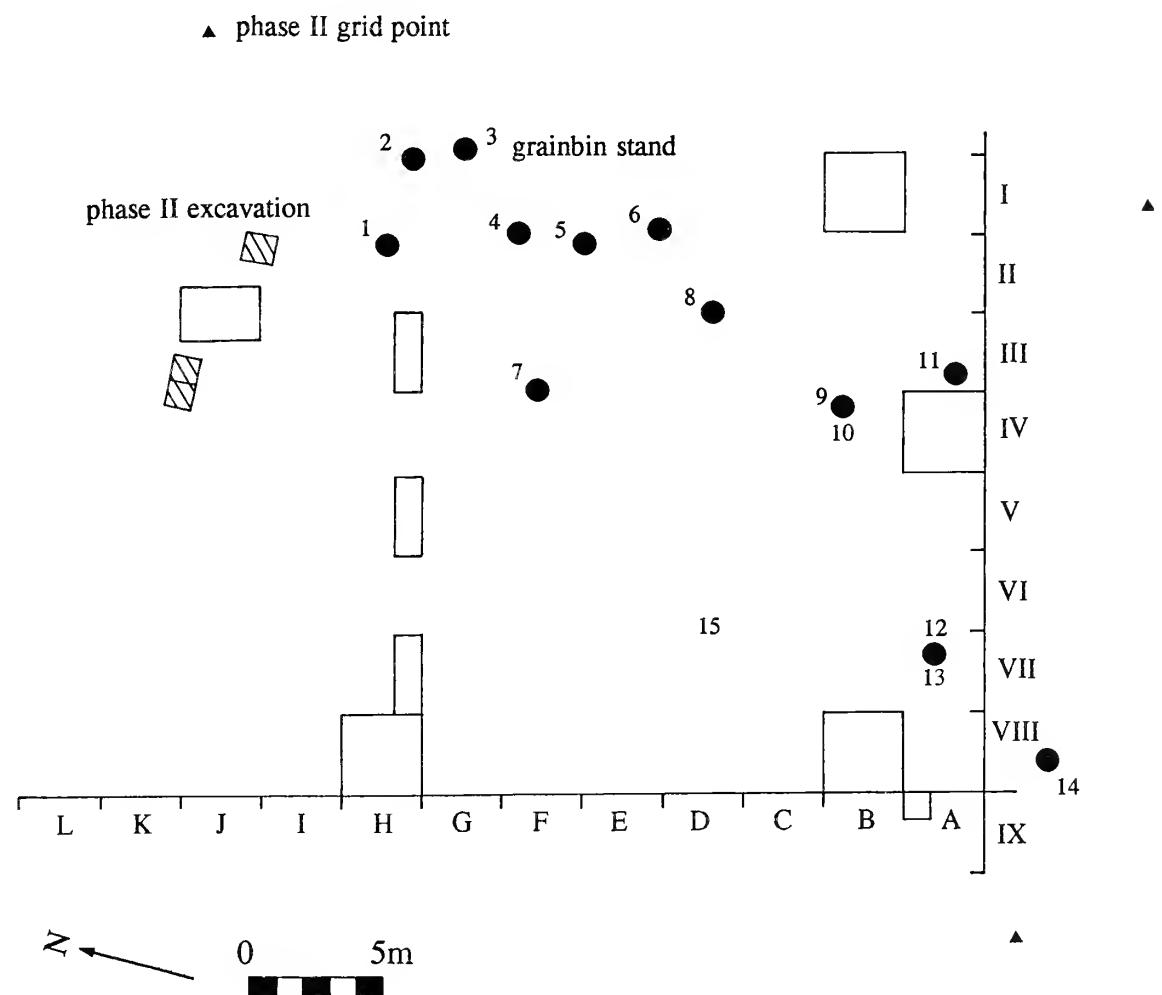


Fig. 22. Site 86, map.

test the possible cattle kraal, excavate where appropriate to acquire a ceramic reference collection and to examine the possibility of Khami interaction with Moloko. Investigations began on July 26 and lasted five days. University of Botswana students helped at this site.

### Method

The team relocated the granary bases and other stone features originally recorded by Van Waarden (Fig. 23). Her numbering system was still intact, and it was continued. Students mapped the remaining features (5 to 15), stone by stone (Figs 24 & 25). A datum line went past features 13, 12 and 11, establishing a 3 x 3 m grid: Roman numerals divided the east-west line, while the alphabet divided the north-south line. Figure 22 shows the relationship between the two systems.

### Middens

The team excavated a few 3 x 3 m squares in midden deposit behind the granary bases near feature 11 (I/B),

feature 9 (IV/A), and near feature 13 (VIII/B). Another 2 x 3 m excavation (II and III/J) explored Van Waarden's dated midden. Because of the heavy erosion, most artefacts clustered in the top 1 to 3 cm. As an exception, a complete jar, eroded around the rim (Fig. 26), was buried below the present ground surface in IX/A. The base of another, smaller, jar lay under it. The middens also included bovid teeth and highly fragmented bone.

### Possible Kraal Area

Another series of excavations in VIII/H (Fig. 27), VII/H and V/H explored the possible cattle kraal. A collapsed tree had afforded some protection against recent erosion, and so there was a greater depth of soil. The soil itself was softer than elsewhere and reworked by termites. The stratigraphy in this series of excavations was similar:

	VIII/H	VII/H	VI/H
<b>Brownish wash</b>	-	-	0-4
<b>light brownish to pale brown</b>	0-37	0-27	4-25
<b>greyish brown</b>	37-42	-	-

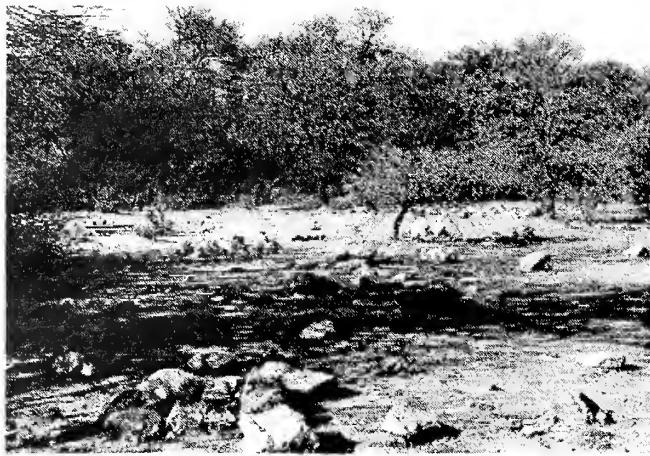


Fig. 23. Site 86, grain bin stands.

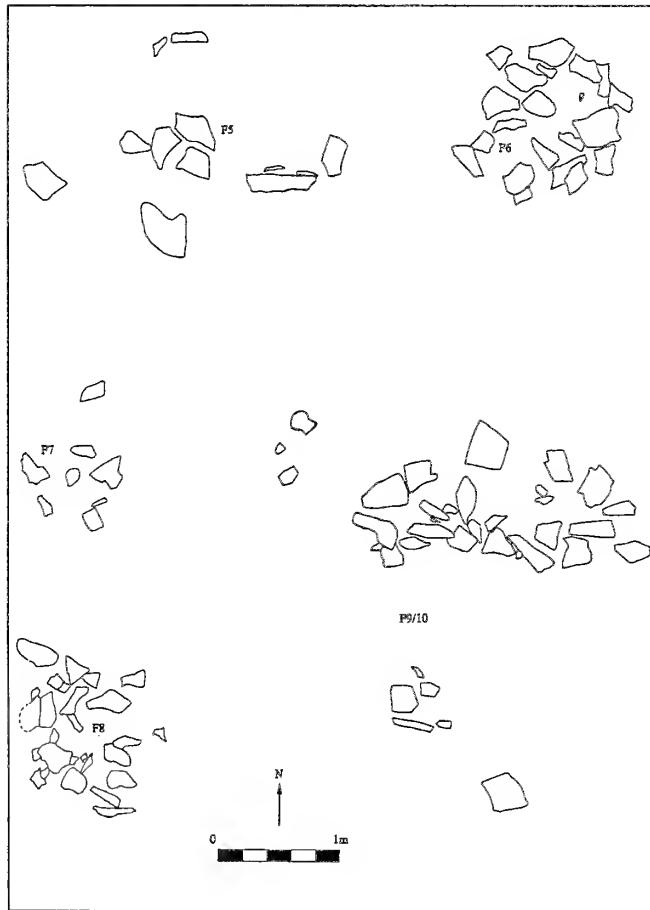


Fig. 24. Site 86, plan of grain bin stands 5 to 10.

In most cases bone and other artefacts clustered in the top 10 cm (level 1). In V/H, however, artefacts did not occur below the surface.

#### Phytolith Analysis

As a datum for comparison, the team took samples from the visible dung in Kinahan's excavations at Site 125, and from below his feature 12. The sample from the central kraal had a high phytolith content. It included 'dumbbells' characteristic of Panicoid grasses, numerous short grass

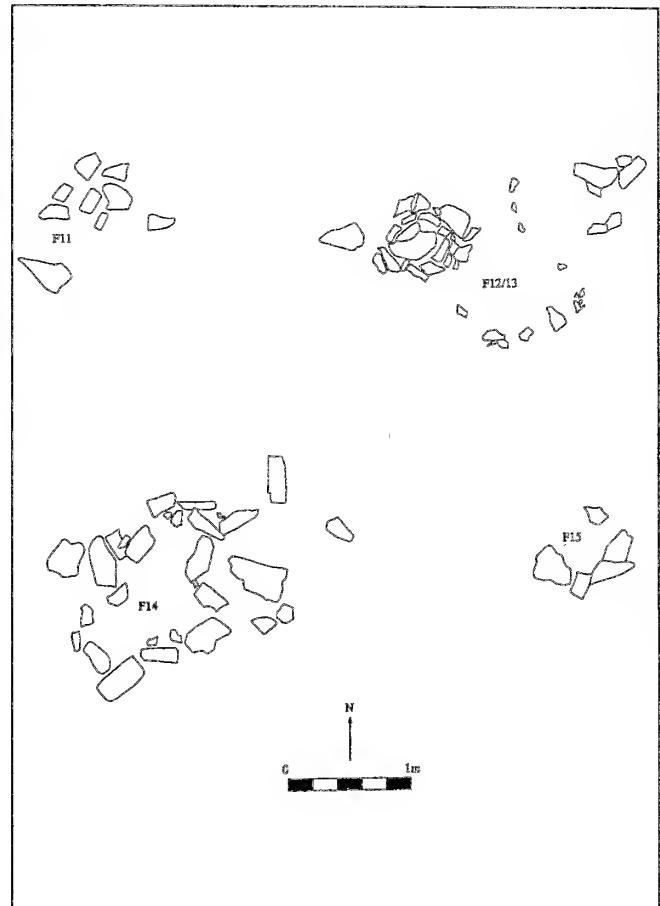


Fig. 25. Site 86, plan of grainbin stands 11 to 15.

hair-tips, Chloridoid types and a wide range of Arundidoid shapes and sizes (Fig. 28 show typical phytoliths in a modern sheep dung sample). The control sample was visibly different. First, the soil contained a greater amount and variety of crystals and crystal fragments of such minerals as feldspar. Secondly, the phytolith count was greatly reduced to a low frequency, and there were few, if any, Panicoid types or short hair tips. Finally, there were some Chloridoid and Arundidoid phytoliths. These data suggest that Chloridoid and Arundidoid phytoliths formed the background spectrum, that is the grasses around the settlement, while the short, grass-hair tips and Panicoid dumbbells characterized the cattle dung in the kraal.

The sample from the soft soil at Site 86 was not the same as either datum. It was more like the control sample except the frequency was higher, at medium, and Chloridoids and Arundidoids were about equal. There were some grass-hair tips, and very few, if any, Panicoids (Table 5).

Thus on the basis of the phytolith analysis, the softer grey soil was not a cattle kraal. It is best interpreted as a termitarium, or a remnant of the original village horizon that had been reworked by termites.

#### Finds

##### Bone

Because of severe erosion, bone and teeth were highly fragmented. Cattle dominated the tooth sample. Cattle teeth

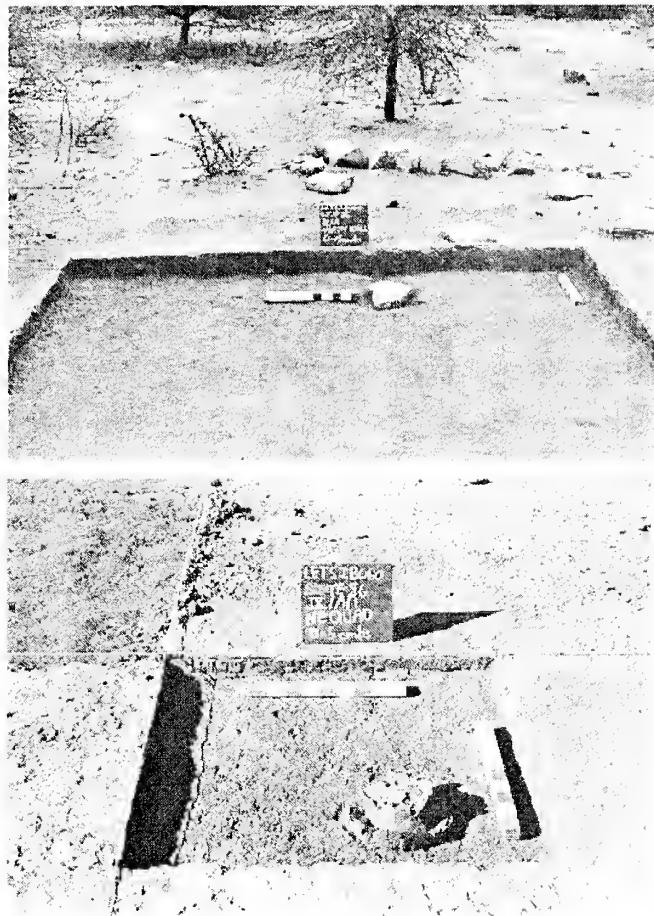


Fig. 26. Site 86: (above) Trench IV/A in shallow midden, Feature 9 in background; (below) buried jar in midden scatter in Trench IX/A.

Table 5. Phytolith Analysis for Site 86.

	Arundidoid	Chloridoid	Panicoid	Hair Tips	Total
Control Site 125					
F12	some	some	very few	-	low
Central Kraal	many	many	many	many	high
Site 86 VIII/H	several	several	very few	some	medium

occurred in the edge of the termitarium in VII/H and the midden in IV/A. They varied from deciduous to erupting to permanent and show that more than one animal contributed to the sample. The midden also contained deciduous and permanent sheep/goat teeth as well as the remains of dassie, hare and a hartebeest-sized animal (Table 6).

#### Metal

One piece of slag came from the surface of the midden in I/B. Because of the severe erosion and lack of other

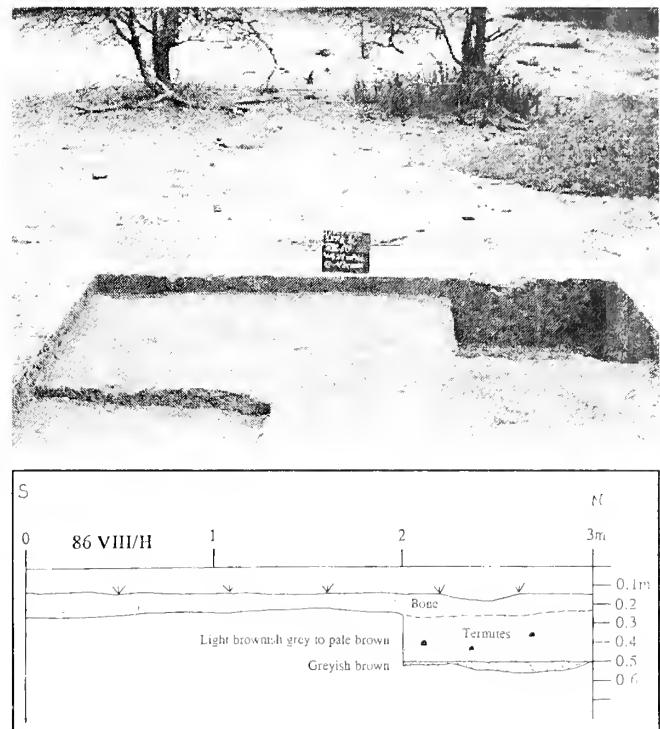


Fig. 27. Site 86: (above) Trench VIII/H in lighter soil area; (below) west section of Trench VIII/H.

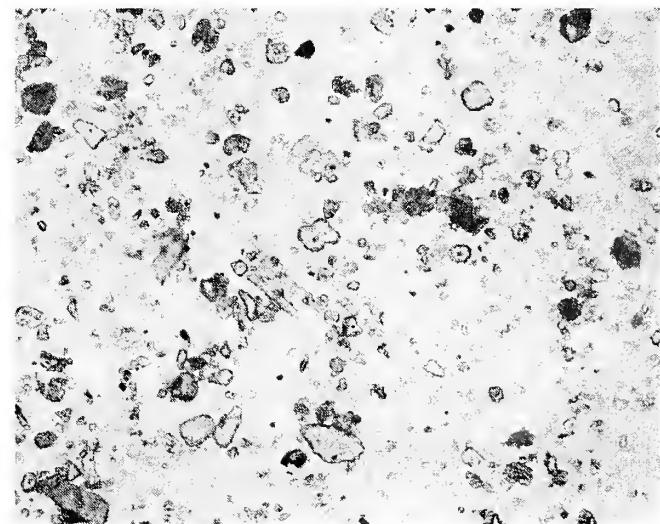


Fig. 28. Range of phytoliths of the central kraal in Sites 125 and 119. The 'dumbbell' Panicoid in the centre measures 20  $\mu$ m. Photomicrograph taken at 200x magnification.

pieces, it is unclear whether this piece was *in situ* or had washed in from elsewhere.

#### Ceramics

The ceramic assemblage was examined first for stylistic types. Because of weathering, it was difficult to distinguish between graphite and a dark burnish. Since the two apparently served the same purpose, they were counted together. There was only one profile in the assemblage and two simple stylistic types: (1) with graphite or dark burnish, and (2) plain:

Table 6. Identification of teeth from Site 86.

Unit	Cow ( <i>Bos taurus</i> )	sheep/goat (ovicaprine)	Other
VII/H/1	LP <sub>4</sub>	LM <sub>3</sub>	-
IV/A/1	RP <sup>3 or 4</sup> LP <sup>3</sup> , LP <sup>4</sup> RM <sup>1</sup> , RM <sup>2</sup> , RM <sup>3</sup>	RM <sup>1</sup> RM <sup>1</sup> RM <sup>2</sup> LM <sub>2</sub> cf LP <sub>4</sub> dp	dassie hare hartebeest-sized

L=left, R=right

P=premolar, M=molar

<sup>x</sup>=upper, <sup>1</sup>=upper 1<sup>st</sup>

dp=deciduous

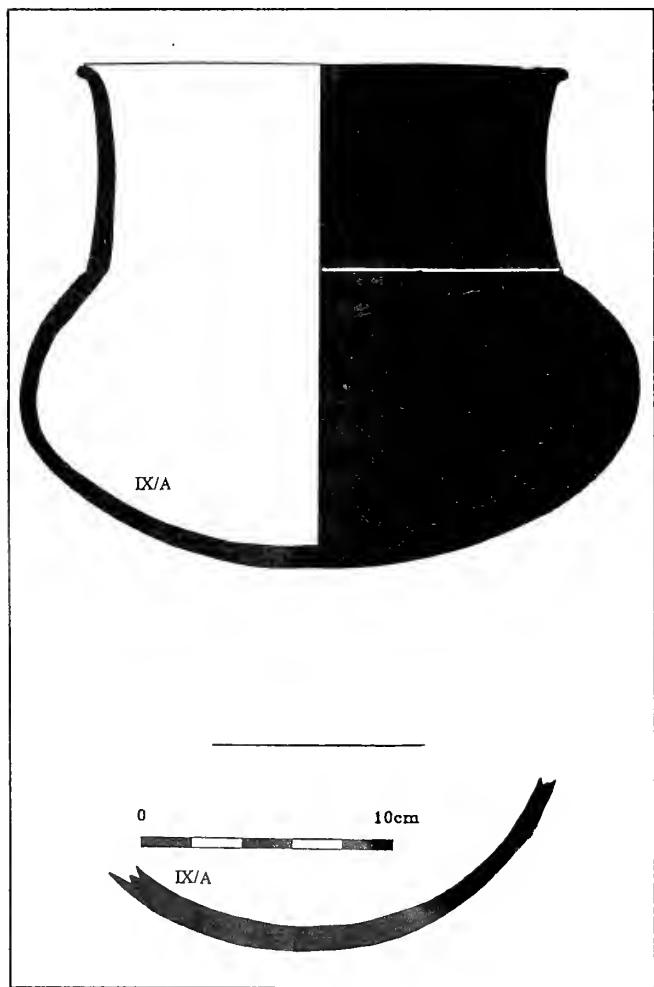


Fig. 29. Site 86, pottery: Type 1 jar and base buried together in Trench IX/A.

Type 1: recurved jar with beaded rim, straight to inward sloping neck, sharp neck/shoulder junction with a single line of incision, bellied body and graphite or

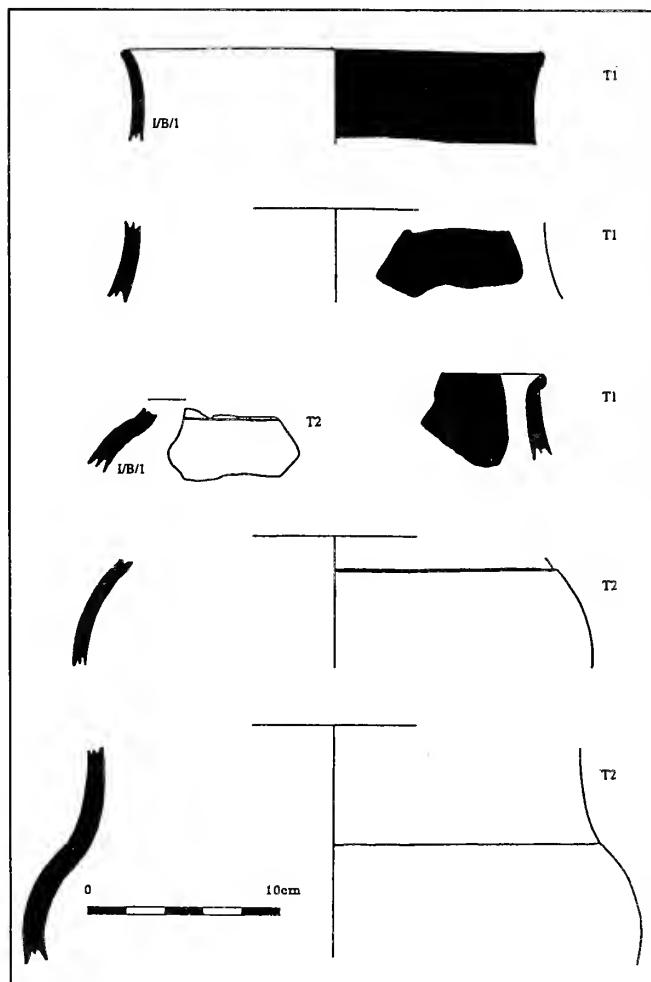


Fig. 30. Site 86, pottery: Type 1 and 2 jars.

dark burnish over the whole surface. The best example was the complete jar from IX/A (Fig. 29). Type 2: recurved jar with or without beaded rim, straight to inward sloping neck, sharp neck/shoulder junction sometimes with a single line of incision but without the graphite or dark burnish (Fig. 30).

Table 7 presents details of their stratigraphic distribution. Specific functions could not be associated with different activity areas because the majority of vessels came from middens. We know from other studies, however, that different sizes of the one shape would have served different purposes.

#### Preliminary Discussion

Site 86 represents the remains of a small homestead of Shona-speaking commoners. The restricted range of stylistic types is characteristic. But because of this restricted range, it is difficult to place the assemblage specifically into the Khami or Zimbabwe facies. The length of jar necks supports a Khami affinity, and this assemblage is most probably related to the ceramics at Site 125 nearby.

As with Site 125, the granaries at Site 86 mark the back of the settlement and conform to the Central Cattle Pattern.

**Table 7. Site 86 Ceramics.**

Unit	Level	Total	Decoration (body sherds)	Rims
Surface		326	9 Type 1 fragments 4 Type 2 fragments 27 gb/db	2 Type 1 12 gb/db rims, recurved jars 8 pl rims, recurved jars
I/B	1	465	1 Type 1 fragment 4 Type 2 fragments 53 gb/db	2 Type 1 1 Type 2 8 pl rims, recurved jars
III/H	1	15	1 gb/db	-
IV/A	1	174	7 gb/db	2 Type 1 1 Type 2 2 gb/db rims, recurved jars 1 pl rim, recurved jar
V/H	1	7	-	-
VII/H	1	12	5 gb/db	-
VII/H	2	1	-	-
VIII/B	1	170	2 Type 2 fragments 7 gb/db	4 pl rims, recurved jars 3 gb/db rims, recurved jars
VIII/H	1	42	1 Type 2 fragment 13 gb/db	1 gb/db rim, recurved jar
IX/A	1	12	-	-
NE Corner		106 (vessel 1) 2 (vessel 2)	- jar base	1 Type 1 (complete) -

gb/db=graphite burnish/dark burnish

pl=plain

These granaries were linked with houses to form a residential zone associated with married women. Despite the erosion, it is clear that household rubbish was dumped behind the houses near the grain bins.

The granaries form an arc that once surrounded the centre of the settlement. Although the lighter soil in Trench VIII is best interpreted as a termitarium, cattle were consumed in the settlement and presumably they had been kraaled somewhere in the centre.

Surface erosion was too severe to justify more specific interpretations. As a consequence, Team 2 moved to the 119 Complex where there was more intact deposit.

#### Site 119B (17DC119B)

The 119 Complex lies about 1.4 km due north of the Sedibe/Motloutse confluence on flat ground covered by

mopane woodland. The Complex includes Sites 119, 119A and 119B (Fig. 31). Because of the problems of pinpointing sites in flat woodland with GPS instruments of varying accuracy, the Phase II team did not relocate Site 119. They concentrated instead on Site 119A. One daga feature was test excavated, yielding Moloko pottery and a bone collagen date of a.d. 1840 ± 60 (Beta-80096). Further Phase II mitigation included large-scale mapping of some 40 grain bin stands at 119B, a short distance away. Less than 50 m southeast of 119B stood some wooden posts and dung deposits from a recently abandoned cattle kraal.

The first task was to test excavate Site 119B to obtain dating material and to investigate the *in situ* remains of a settlement thought to be Moloko because of its proximity to 119A. On the basis of visible dung deposits and arcs of grain bin stands, Site 119B comprised at least three separate

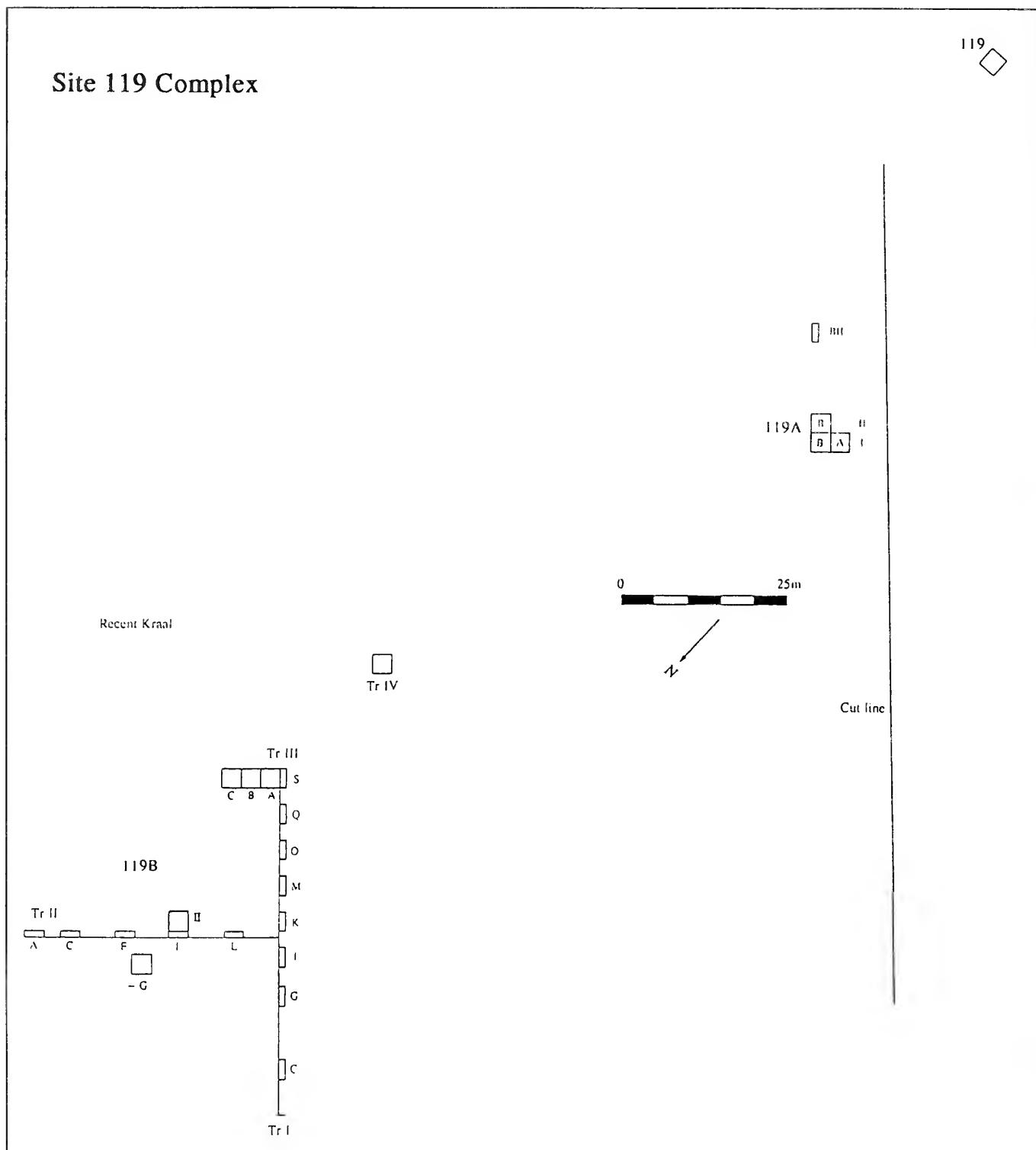


Fig. 31. Site 119 Complex, map.

homestead units. The team examined the most westerly one (21.49.27.5S 27.42.47E).

#### Method

The datum line for Trench I stretched from grain bin area to grain bin area, a distance of about 57 m (Fig. 32). Trench II was placed at right angles to Trench I, crossing at 29 m in the central kraal. A third trench extended at right angles from Trench I at 54 m (Fig. 33). A series of 1 x 3 m

excavations followed the major trench lines, and a few 3 x 3 m squares exposed special features.

#### Stratigraphy

In excavations away from the central kraal, a light brown to red brown soil lay on top of a stoney base. Closer to the kraal a brownish grey wash from the kraal overlay the light to red brown layer. Softer light brownish grey material marked the kraal itself (Fig. 34).

	I/C	I/G	I/I	I/K	I/M	I/O	I/Q	II/F	II/H	II/L
<b>Yellowish brown soil</b>	-	-	-	0-6/10	-	-	-	-	0-8/10	-
<b>Brownish grey soil</b>	0-2	-	-	-	0-12/15	-	-	0-10	-	-
<b>Light brownish soil</b>	-	0-16/19	0-18/20	0-18/20	0-12/15	-	-	-	8/10-17/18	0-18
<b>Light to red brown soil</b>	2-10	-	-	-	-	0-10	0-10	10-17	-	18-21
<b>Stoney base</b>	10-	19-	18/20-25	18/20-34	12/15-20	10-	10-	17-	17/18	21-

Midden areas near the grain bin stands produced a slightly different sequence:

I/S      II/CC

<b>light yellowish brown to yellowish brown midden</b>	0	0-10/14
<b>light to red brown soil</b>	8-18	10/14-14/16
<b>stoney base</b>	18-	14/16-

### Middens

Midden deposit lay *in situ* between grain bin stands at the ends of Trenches 1 and III. Potsherds, bones and grindstones lying flat marked the original walking surface. This surface varied from 8 to 10 cm below present ground level in III/A and III/B and from 10 to 12 cm in III/C (Figs 35, 36). The original surface was designated level 2 and the deposit above level 1. The small amount of ash (noted only in I/S) suggests the midden was deflated. Some modern glass came from the upper half of level 1, but all the pottery below was characteristic of an older assemblage. The grain bin stands were associated with this older assemblage.

The team exposed another midden deposit in II/A-AA and II/C-CC (Fig. 37). The original walking surface (level 2) lay about 8 cm below present ground level in II/C and 9 to 11 cm in II/AA. A spindle whorl came from among the pottery in II/C/1 and a ceramic disc in II/CC/1. This midden was associated with grain bin stands near the beginning of Trench II (Fig. 38). Three Achatina shells lay among the central rocks of the grain bin in II/CC, and a thin ash lens lay on the original surface to the east of the granary. Esterhuysen in Team 2 identified charcoal from this lens as a mixture of *Acacia sp.*, *A. tortillis* and *A. karroo/nilotica*. More *A. tortillis* occurred in the midden in II/AA.

### House Areas

The team searched for house remains in II-G between the grain bin stands and the central kraal. An original walking surface lay 6 to 9 cm below the present ground surface in red brown soil. A few cattle teeth and pottery lay on the surface in on the surface, but hut remains were not uncovered.

The remains of a recent structure stood on the surface in Trench IV (Fig. 39). A rough circle of upright stones about 2.7 m across marked the outside wall. A circular daga firebowl about 45 cm in diameter stood on a daga floor to the left of the doorway facing in. Charcoal in the fireplace was a mixture of *A. tortillis* and *A. karroo/nilotica*. The fireplace, along with the size, shape and type of wall indi-



Fig. 32. Site 119B: (above) Trench I looking northwest, Trench III on right; (below) Trench II looking east.

cates that this building had been a kitchen.

The tang of an iron hoe came from about 5 cm below present surface inside the kitchen. Modern glass fragments lay on the surface outside in the general vicinity. A few potsherds below the kitchen in Trench IV at a depth of about 10 cm correlated with the older village level in Trench I. Consequently, this kitchen was most likely associated with the recent cattle kraal remains nearby.

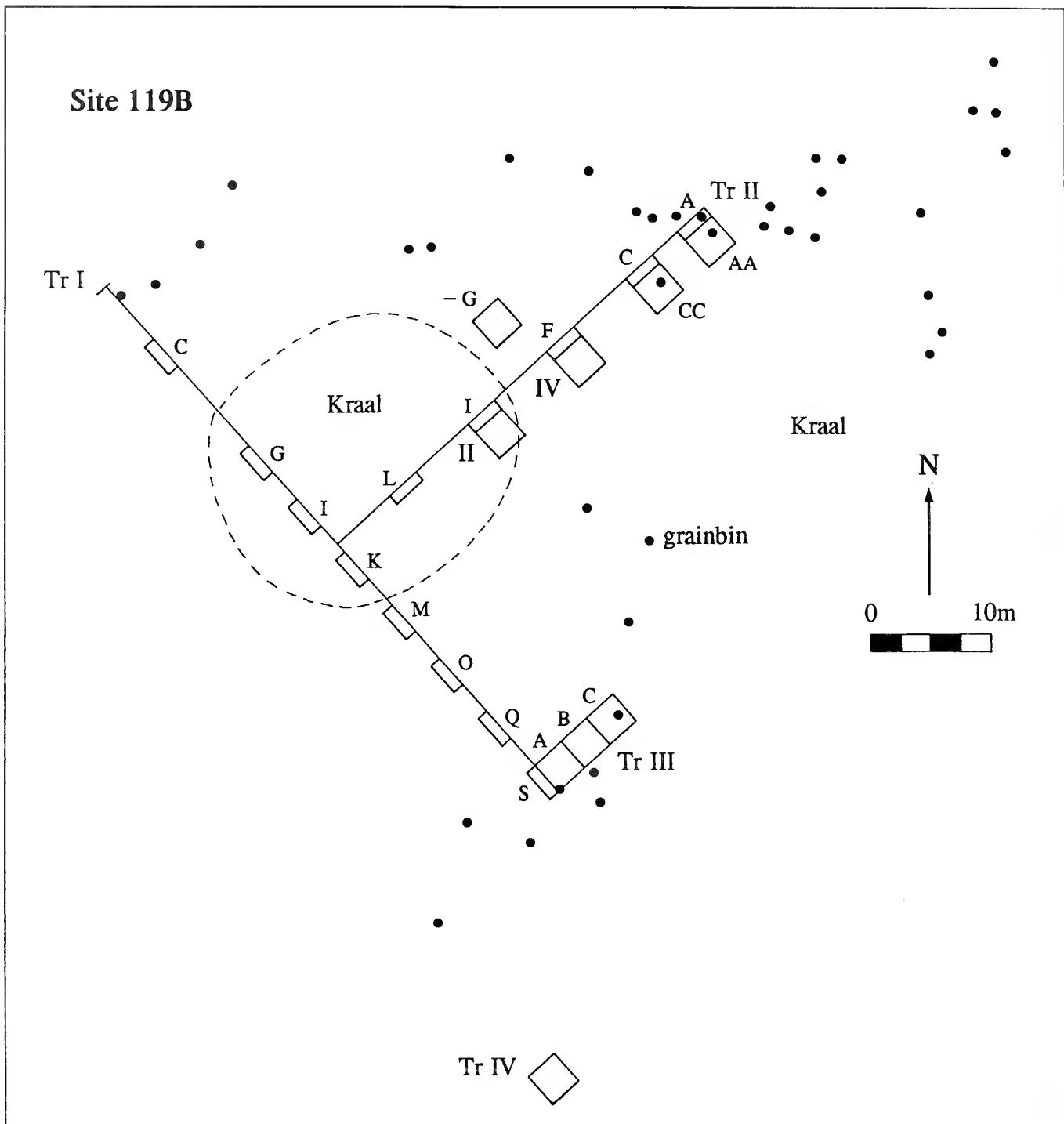


Fig. 33. Site 119 B, map.

#### Central Kraal Area

The soft grey kraal deposit in the centre extended from about 14 m to 34,6 m in Trench I and over to excavation I in Trench II. Thus the kraal was roughly 20 m in diameter. Termites had reworked the kraal deposit, particularly in I/K. A 60 cm deep hole (40 x 50 cm wide) had been dug into the stoney base of I/K and later filled with loose stone and grey soil (Fig. 34). This hole was probably the remains of a grain storage pit. The kraal deposit in II/I and II/II contained some pottery and bone. These objects may be the remains of a midden that accumulated next to the kraal

fence, or alternatively, this part of the kraal may have been used as a midden.

#### Phytolith and Spherulite Analyses

The team analyzed the phytolith content of soil samples from the kraal deposits in I/I, II/I and II/L. Another sample from II/AA/2, below the main midden horizon, served as a control, along with a sample from the ash lens in II/CC/2. The control yielded a low count of background Arundinoid, while the midden ash had a medium count of background

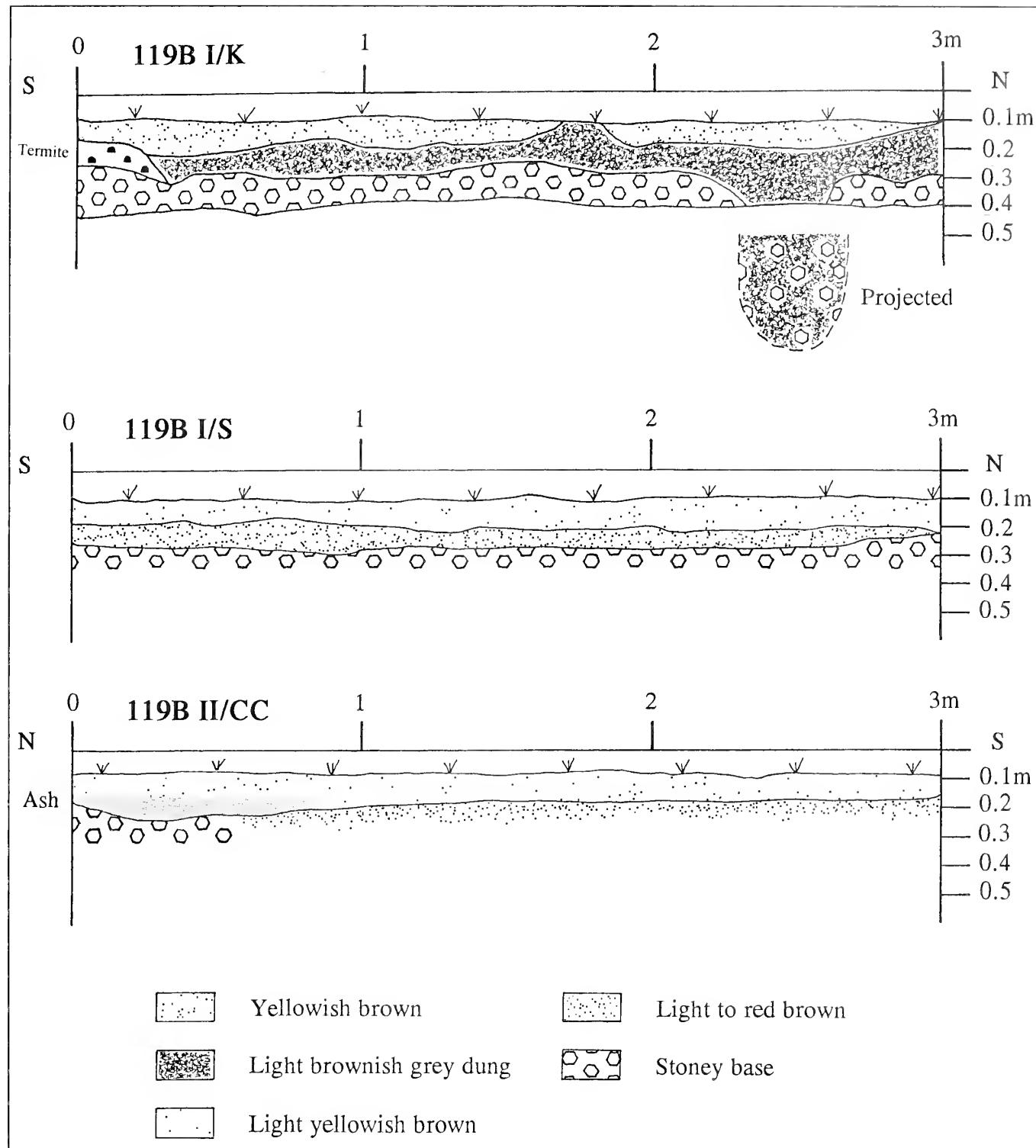


Fig. 34. Site 119B, sections of typical stratigraphic sequences.

types along with very few Panicoids and grass-hair tips. The three kraal deposits all contained high counts of all the major categories (Table 8).

To test for the possibility that the kraal deposit in II/I was derived from sheep and goat rather than cattle, we examined a sample for spherulites. We found none, and therefore conclude that cattle were responsible for all the excavated dung. Small stock, of course, could have been kept in an area not excavated.

### Finds

#### Bone

In the sample of teeth cattle were most frequent (Table 9). Cattle teeth occurred in the midden in II/A and II/AA, as well as on the walking surface in II-G. A deciduous lower premolar in II/K probably represented small stock. In addition to the teeth, the main midden areas yielded a considerable amount of diagnostic postcranial remains.

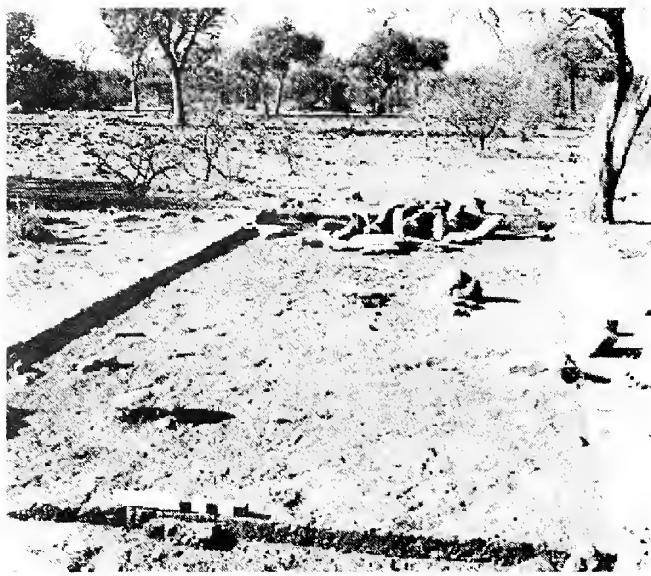


Fig. 35. Site 119B, original walking surface near grain bins in Trench III.

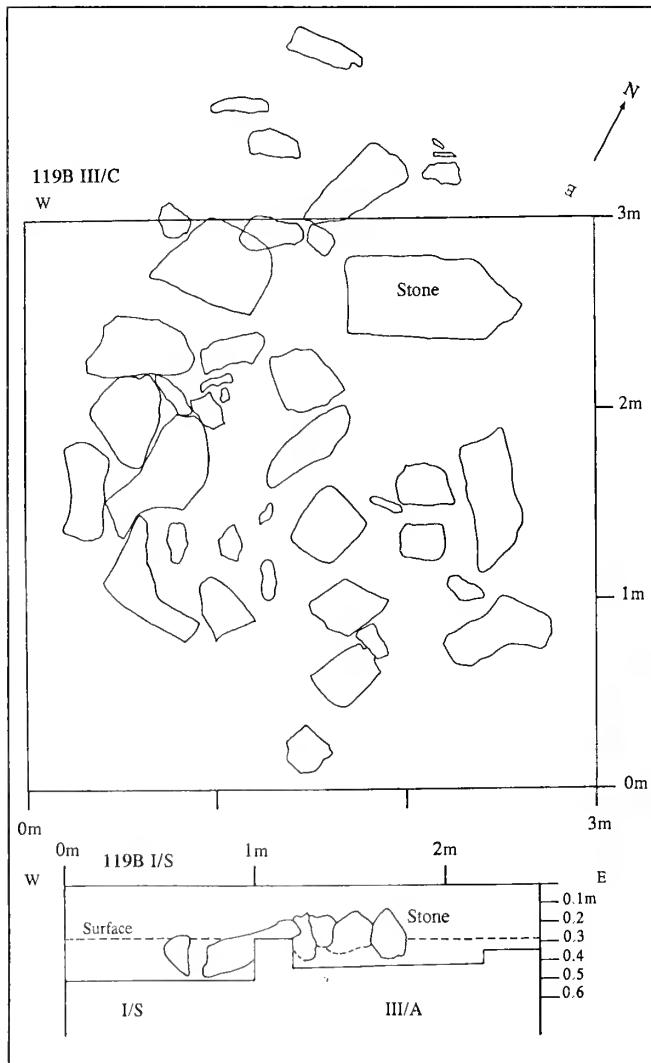


Fig. 36. Site 119B: (above) plan of grainbin stand in Trench III/C; (below) section through grain bin stand in Trench I/S and Trench III/A.

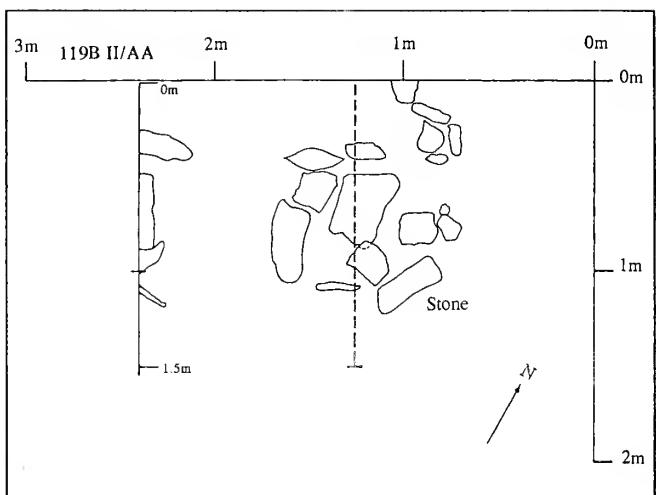


Fig. 37. Site 119B: (above) original walking surface around grain bins in Trench II/AA. Note bones lying flat in front of sign; (below) plan and section of grain bin stand in Trench II/AA.

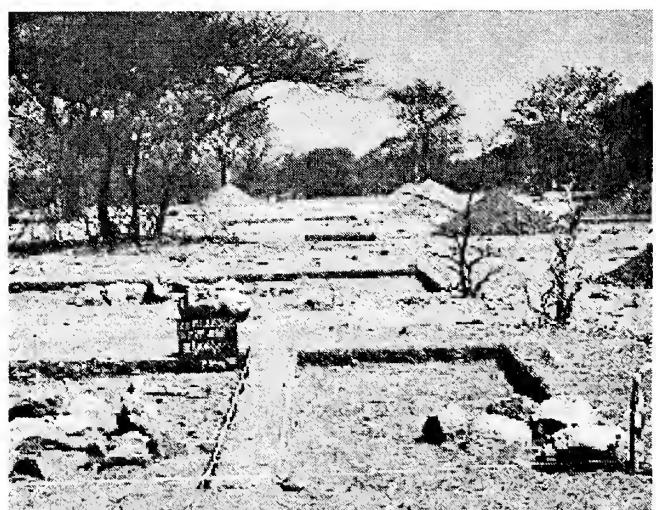


Fig. 38. Site 119B, midden area among grain bin stands at beginning of Trench II. Note kraal deposit in background.

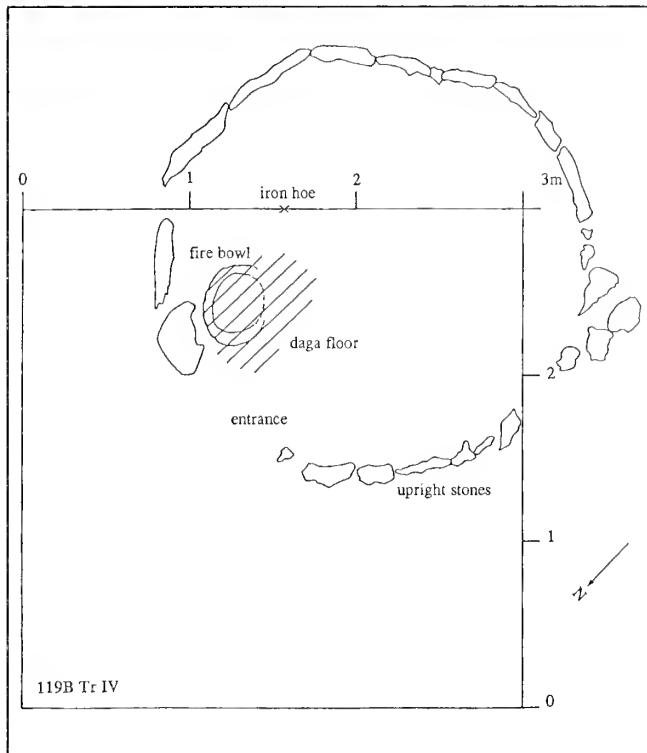
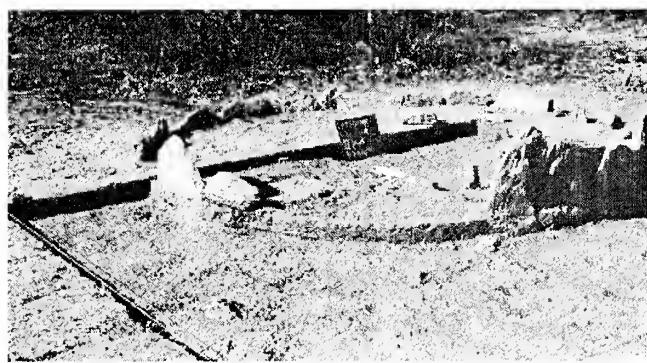


Fig. 39. Site 119B, house remains in Trench IV: (above) looking southeast; (below) plan.

lower premolar in II/K probably represented small stock. In addition to the teeth, the main midden areas yielded a considerable amount of diagnostic postcranial remains.

#### Metal

The iron hoe from the kitchen in Trench IV weighs 332 g. It includes the tang (141 mm long and 21 x 14 mm at its widest point) and part of the blade (108 mm wide). Another piece of iron came from the midden in II/AA/1. It has a rectangular cross section and is bent into a semicircle. Both pieces probably date to the Historic period

#### Ceramics

The assemblage yielded three shapes, a recurved jar, an incurved bowl and a necked bowl. The combinations of their profiles with decoration position and decoration formed two types previously found at Site 86 and two new ones:

Type 1: recurved jar with beaded rim, straight to inward sloping neck, sharp neck/shoulder junction

Table 8. Phytolith Analysis for Site 119B.

	Arundin	Chlorid	Panicoi	Hair	Total
Control	some	some	very few	-	low
II/AA/2					
Midden	several	several	very few	very few	medium
II/CC/2					
Kraal	many	many	several	many	high
II/II					
Kraal	many	many	many	many	high
II/L					
Kraal	many	many	many	many	high
I/I					

Table 9. Identification of teeth from Site 119B.

Unit	Cow ( <i>Bos taurus</i> )	Sheep/goat ( <i>ovicaprine</i> )
II/AA/1	LP <sub>3</sub> , LP <sub>4</sub> , LM <sub>1</sub>	
II/AA/2	LP <sup>4</sup> dp, RP <sup>3</sup> dp	
II/A/2	LM <sup>2</sup> young	
II/C/2		cf LP <sub>4</sub> dp
II/-G/2	RP <sub>2</sub> , RP <sub>3</sub> , RM <sup>1</sup> , RM <sup>2</sup> , RP <sup>3</sup>	

L=left, R=right

P=premolar, M=molar

<sup>x</sup>=upper, <sup>1</sup>=upper 1st

dp=deciduous

with a single line of incision, bellied body and graphite or dark burnish over the whole surface (Fig. 40);

Type 2: recurved jar with or without beaded rim, straight to inward sloping neck, sharp neck/shoulder junction sometimes with single line of incision but without graphite (Figs 41 & 42);

Type 3: thin (4-6mm), incurved bowl well burnished (Fig. 42);

Type 4: necked bowl with graphite (Fig. 42).

Table 10 presents the distribution of these types in the excavations. They clearly form a single assemblage associated with the kraal and grain bin stands. This assemblage belongs to the Zimbabwe/Khami commoner cluster, and the neck length supports a Khami affiliation. One fragment bearing traces of red ochre and another fragment of a red and black bowl came from II/CC/2. These fragments can be identified as Moloko.

#### Preliminary Discussion

Site 119B was a small village encompassing a few organised according to the principles of the Central Cattle

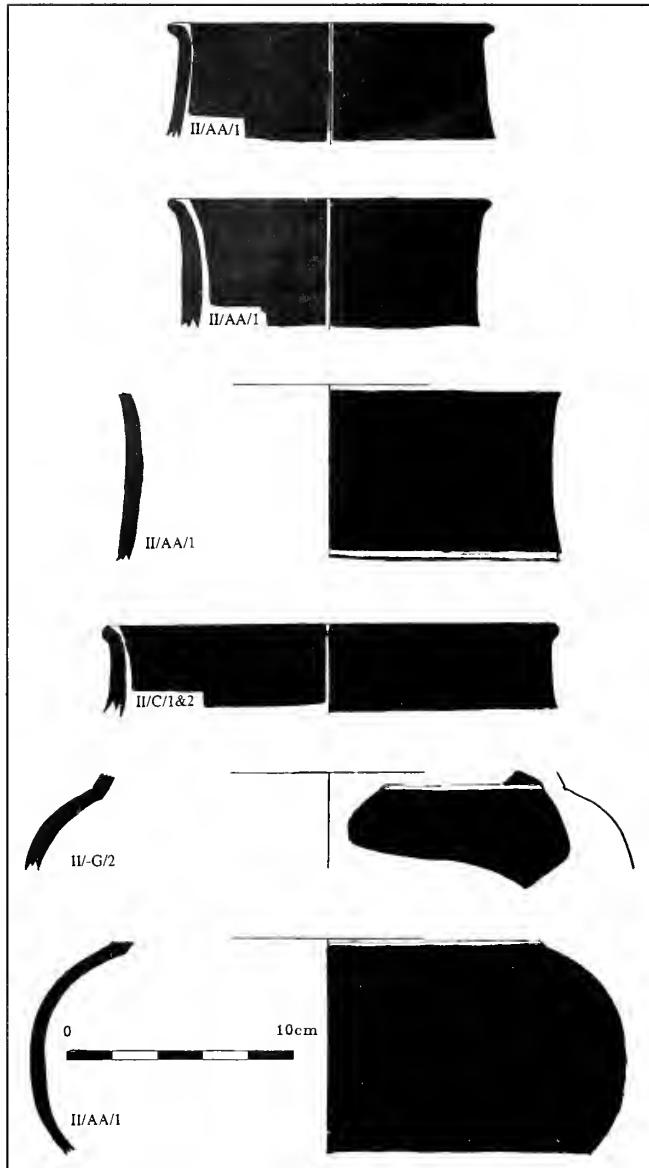


Fig. 40. Site 119B, pottery: Type 1 jars.

Pattern. Trench I bisected one such unit, exposing midden areas near the grain bins at the back of the residential zone. The grain bin stands in II/A, II/AA and II/CC may have belonged to a separate unit. Whatever the case, they too were associated with a midden.

The cattle kraal that may have been associated with the granaries in Trench II lay less than 30 m to the southeast. Present-day cattle had disturbed the deposit, and so the team did not excavate there. The kraal exposed in Trench I, however, was largely undisturbed, and its composition and size were typical. The pit in I/K is in keeping with storage facilities in the Central Cattle Pattern. Iron Age agriculturalists dug pits into cattle kraals in order to store such grains as sorghum and millets. The dung above hid the pits against raiding, while the dung inside the pit produced methane that helped to prevent insect infestation and fungus growth. As a result of the methane, it was possible to store food for several years, and the pits were an insurance against bad times. After their initial use, the pits often

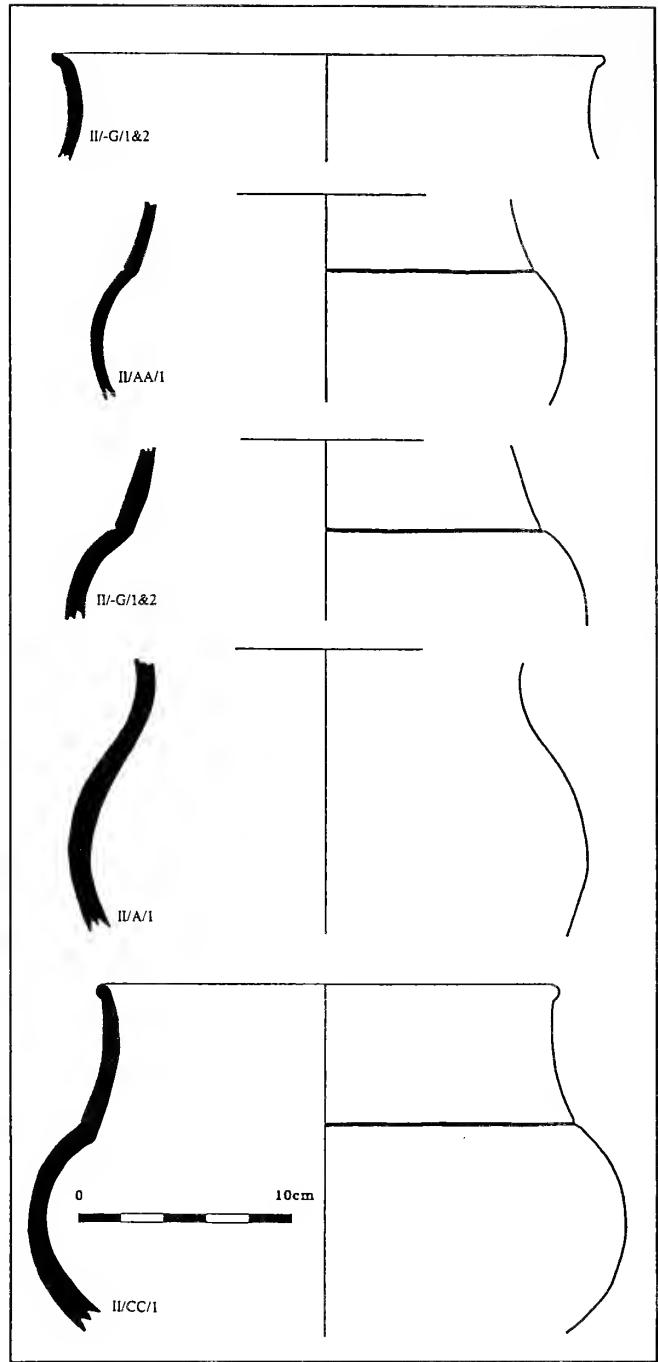


Fig. 41. Site 119B, pottery: Type 2 jars.

became rubbish dumps. Unfortunately, the pit in I/K was devoid of any cultural material.

The phytolith analysis was more productive. Even the crude procedure used here helped to categorize the differences between the control, midden and kraal samples. In addition the spherulite analysis showed that cattle were responsible for all the excavated kraal deposits.

The ceramic analysis shows that these kraals and grain bins were part of a Khami commoner village. Initially, however, the Phase II team had identified this site as Moloko. There is only minimal evidence for a Moloko presence and even that is ambiguous. The only structural remains linked to Sotho-Tswana people were the relatively recent cattle kraal, associated artefacts and kitchen circle in

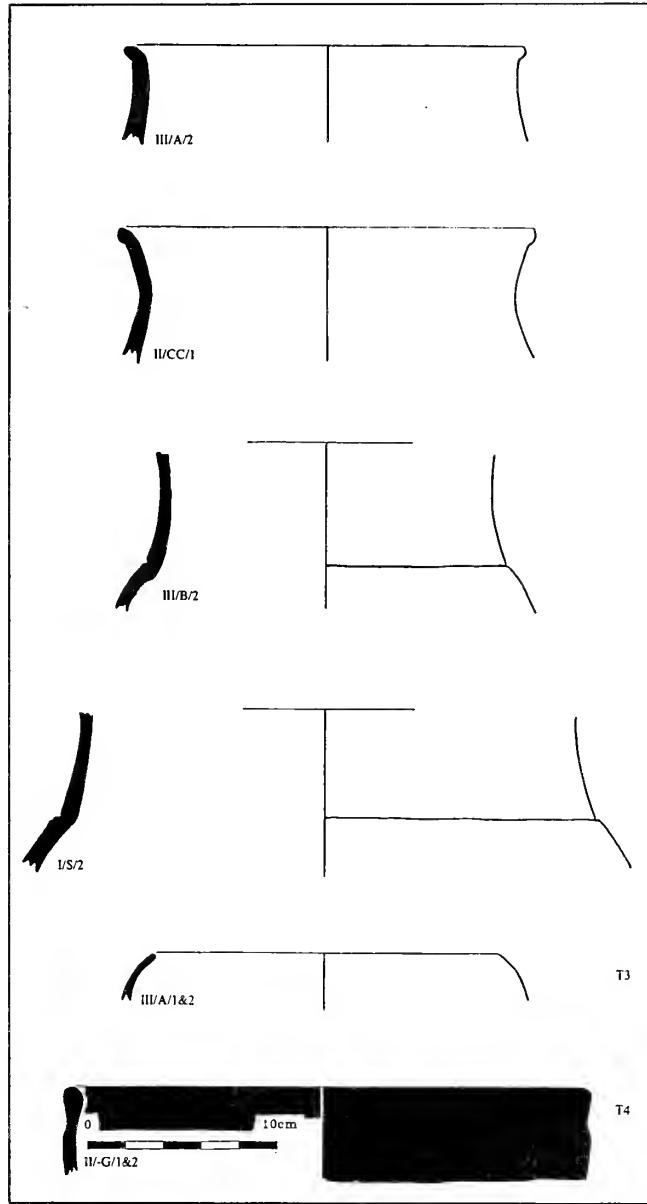


Fig. 42. Site 119B, pottery: Type 2 and Type 3 bowls.

Trench IV, stratified above the Khami village horizon.

More Moloko pottery occurred on the surface near Site 119A, where it had been recorded during Phase II investigations. Since a burnt daga structure also still remained - a rare feature on Late Iron Age sites in the Dam Basin - Team 2 decided to recover more data from there.

## SITE 119A (17DC119A)

### Method

Three 3 x 3 m squares were placed in an L-shape over the daga and grainbin stands (Fig. 43A). The stands in our I/B and II/A are probably the same as features 7 and 8, respectively, in the Phase II report, while the daga mound probably corresponds to feature 2. A third trench comprising a 1 x 3 m cutting explored an open area 12 m south.

Table 10. Site 119B Ceramics.

Unit	Level	Total	Decoration (body sherds)	Rims
I/C	1	5	1 gb/db	-
I/G	1	2	2 gb/db	-
I/I	1	1	1 gb/db	-
I/M	1	6	3 gb/db	-
I/Q	1	4	-	1 pottery disk
I/S	1	30	7 gb/db	-
I/S	2	16	1 Type 2 fragment 1 gb/db	1 pl rim, recurved jar
II/A	1	85	25 gb/db	1 Type 1 2 Type 2
II/A	2	2	1 gb/db	-
II/AA	1	387	7 Type 1 fragments 7 Type 2 fragments 108 gb/db	5 Type 1 4 Type 2 15 gb/db rims, recurved jars 12 pl rims, recurved jars
II/AA	2	48	21 gb/db	1 pl rim, recurved jar
II/C	1	174	2 Type 2 fragments 2 red ochre burnished fragments 46 gb/db plus 1 spindle whorl	1 Type 1 1 small cup, coarse 2 gb rims, recurved jars 2 pl rim, recurved jar
II/C	2	4	-	-
II/CC	1	153	1 Type 1 fragment 1 Type 2 fragment 38 gb/db plus 1 pottery disk	1 Type 2 3 gb/db rims, recurved jars 3 pl rims, recurved jars
II/CC	2	164	1 Type 2 fragment 59 gb/db 1 bl/r bowl 1 rob	2 Type 2 3 gb/db rims, recurved jars 3 pl rims, recurved jars
II/F	1	9	-	-
II/G	1	149	1 Type 1 fragment 1 Type 2 fragment 28 gb/db	1 Type 1 1 Type 4 2 pl rims, recurved jars
II/G	2	104	1 Type 1 fragment 1 Type 2 fragment 39 gb/db	2 pl rims, recurved jars
II/I	1	9	9 gb/db	-
II/II	2	3	1 gb/db	-
III/A	1	209	1 Type 1 fragment 21 gb/db	1 Type 1 1 Type 2 1 Type 3 6 pl rims, recurved jars
III/A	2	92	24 gb/db 3 Type 1 fragments 2 Type 2 fragment	2 Type 2 2 pl rims, recurved jars
III/B	2	68	1 Type 1 fragment 5 Type 2 fragments 21 gb/db	-
III/C	2	15	3 gb/db	-

bl/r=black and red

gb/db=graphite burnish/dark burnish

pl=plain

rob=red ochre burnish

### Stratigraphy

The team exposed the daga lumps, labelling the soil above as level 1. This first level varied from 3 to 5 cm in depth. The daga lumps and the material between and under, varying from 5 to 7 cm in depth, belonged to level 2. The

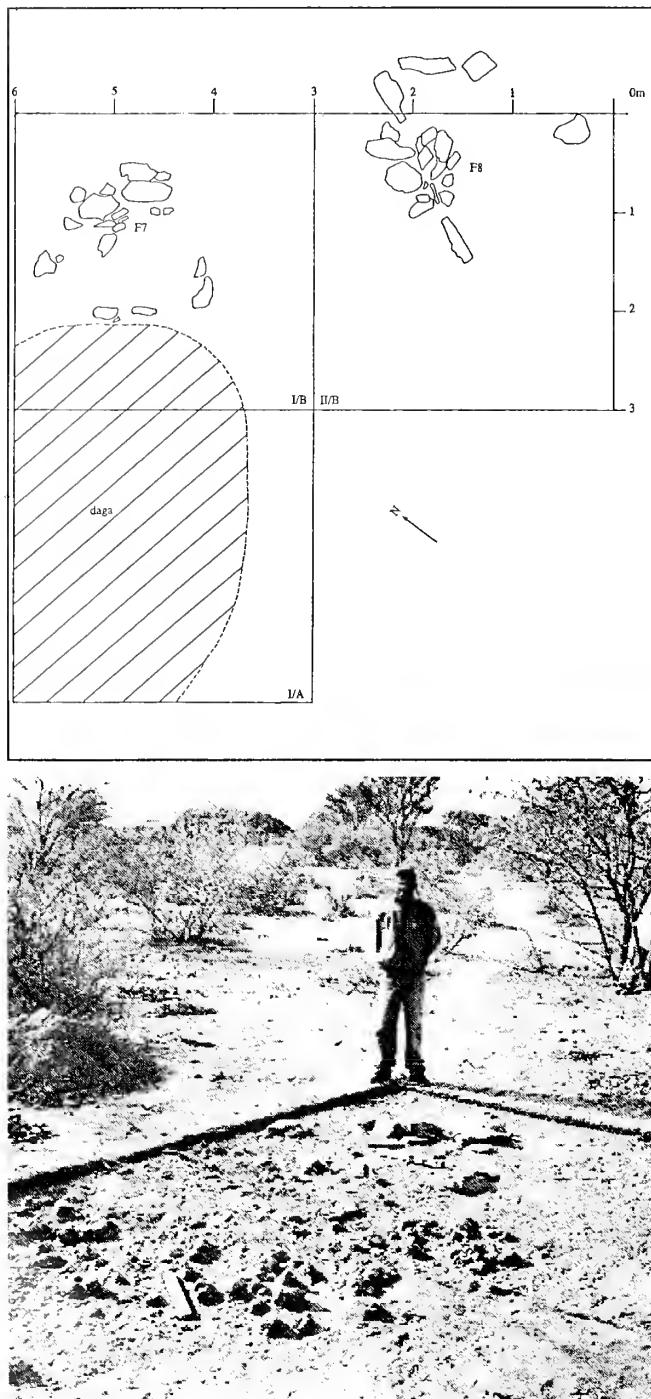


Fig. 43. Site 119A: (above) plan; (below) daga concentration looking east.

soil in both levels was dark greyish brown. The soil in Trench III was a lighter greyish brown.

#### Middens and Granaries

The daga lumps were mostly derived from the grainbins in the immediate vicinity, and they had therefore fallen on to the pots and bones (Fig. 43B). The artefacts themselves formed part of a deflated midden. The midden contained small bits of charcoal from *A. tortillis* and *A. karroo/nilotica*. Level 1 was a mixture of the midden and more recent material washed on top.

#### Finds

##### Ceramics

The paste of some pots was a bright orange from a second firing when the daga structure burnt down. A spindle whorl lay among the daga in I/A/2, while trench III was devoid of artefacts.

The small sample contained Types 1 to 3 found at 119B and two new ones (Fig. 44):

Type 5: (fragmentary): open bowl with black and red colour separated by fingernail incision;

Type 6: jar with short inward sloping neck.

Although fragmentary, Type 5 is diagnostic of Moloko, and Type 6 probably also belongs to Moloko. Types 1 and 2 are characteristic of Khami commoner assemblages, but some Type 2, especially incomplete jars lacking beaded rims or single line incision, could be confused with Moloko vessels. To help resolve this ambiguity, we separated undecorated Types 2 and 6 by comparing various proportions of shape (Fig. 45). Typically, the height of Khami jars is equal or less than mouth diameter, whereas height is usually greater in Moloko. Furthermore, neck length is about 40% and the widest body diameter about 60% of height on Khami jars. In contrast, Moloko jars have shorter necks, about 20% of height, and longer bodies with the widest diameter less than half of height, around 40%.

Table 11 presents the stratigraphic distribution of all types. As the table shows, Moloko vessels and associated fragments clustered in level 1, above the larger Khami assemblage.

#### Preliminary Discussion

The concentration of Moloko pottery in level 1, and on the surface in the near vicinity, indicates that there was a Moloko occupation in this area after the Khami settlements were abandoned. The previous Phase II excavations do not contradict this interpretation, for Moloko pottery only occurred on the surface and in the top 5 cm of the daga mound of feature 1 (Campbell *et al.* 1995:342). The lower horizon at 119A was therefore probably contemporaneous with 119B.

The association of midden and granaries at 119A and 119B is the same, and presumably the overall settlement organization was also similar. In this case features 1-5 and 7-13 at 119A, encompassing our Trenches I and II, probably formed the outer boundary of a residential zone that arced to the east, where the terrain is still flat. Site 119A may have been 60 m across, like 119B, and it was therefore probably not as small as previously thought. The new size of 119A probably overlaps with the original area designated as Site 119. The remains of the later Moloko occupation were not obvious. Nevertheless, the 19th century collagen date (Beta 80096), recovered during Phase II, is unlikely to apply to the Moloko pottery from here. It is more likely to apply to Site 119.

Table 11. Site 119A Ceramics.

Unit	Level	Total	Decoration (body sherds)	Rims
I/A	1	64	1 Type 1 fragment 1 Type 2 fragment 15 gb/db	1 gb/db rim, recurved jar
I/A	2	18	6 gb	-
I/B	1	257	1 Type 1 fragment 1 Type 2 fragment 57 gb/db 2 rob	1 Type 1 1 Type 6 4 gb/db rims, recurved jars 3 pl rims, recurved jars
I/B	2	20	13 gb/db	1 Type 3
II/B	1	42	12 gb/db 1 Type 5 1 rob	-
II/B	2	7	5 gb/db	-

gb=graphite burnished/dark burnished

pl=plain

rob=red ochre burnished

### SITE 119 (17DC119)

Team 2 excavated a 3 x 3 m square into a midden on the edge of the slope about 50 m south of 119A. The midden deposit varied from 10 to 20 cm in depth and contained fragmented bone, ostrich eggshell and some pottery. The pottery lacks diagnostic types (Table 12), but its surface finish suggests that it probably dates to the last 200 years.

### SITE 38 (17DC38)

The site sat (21.50.44S 27.42.00E) on a slight rise about 650 m northeast of the Kurumela hills, approximately 650 m south of the Sedibe River and 200 m north of a small stream.

The archaeology is well described in the Phase II report and here it is only necessary to summarize those findings to introduce the additional Phase III tasks. Briefly, the site consisted of 13 stone granary foundations in an arc with a single larger stone feature at the northern end. The Phase II team thought this was a house platform and excavated the outer perimeter to test this function. They also excavated a shallow midden at the southern end of the site that yielded carbonised seeds, Khami pottery and an early 19th century date that was thought to correspond to the collapse of the Khami state. In this context, the house platform could have been associated with a person of high status.

Following a Kalanga analogy, the Phase 2 team thought the headman would have occupied the stone platform, while

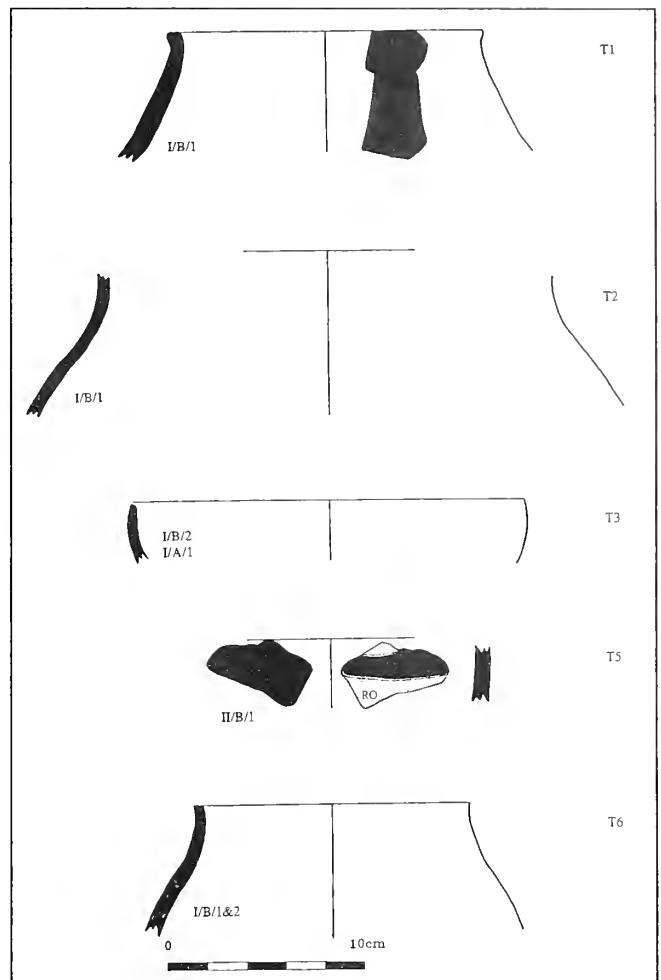


Fig. 44. Site 119A, pottery: Types 1 to 6.

his wives would have lived to the southeast, between the stone platform and the grain bins. The distribution of granary foundations further suggests that grain bins directly behind the headman's house served his personal needs. Other clusters indicate the likely positions of wives' huts and possibly low status dependents near the midden at the southern periphery of the site. An isolated granary foundation to the southwest might mark the men's meeting place.

This interpretation is based on two key assumptions: first, the main stone feature is a Khami-period house platform associated with the granary foundations, rather than a more recent burial cairn; and secondly, the site did not have a livestock enclosure because cattle were kept at higher status sites.

The terms of reference for the Phase III investigation required Team 1 to excavate the platform, and to analyse soil samples to detect livestock enclosures. Team 1 was also charged with increasing the samples of pottery and seeds from the midden.

### Method and Stratigraphy

The suspected house platform was drawn in detail and photographed before a 1 x 4 m trench bisected it from east to west (Fig. 46). All loose stone was removed from the

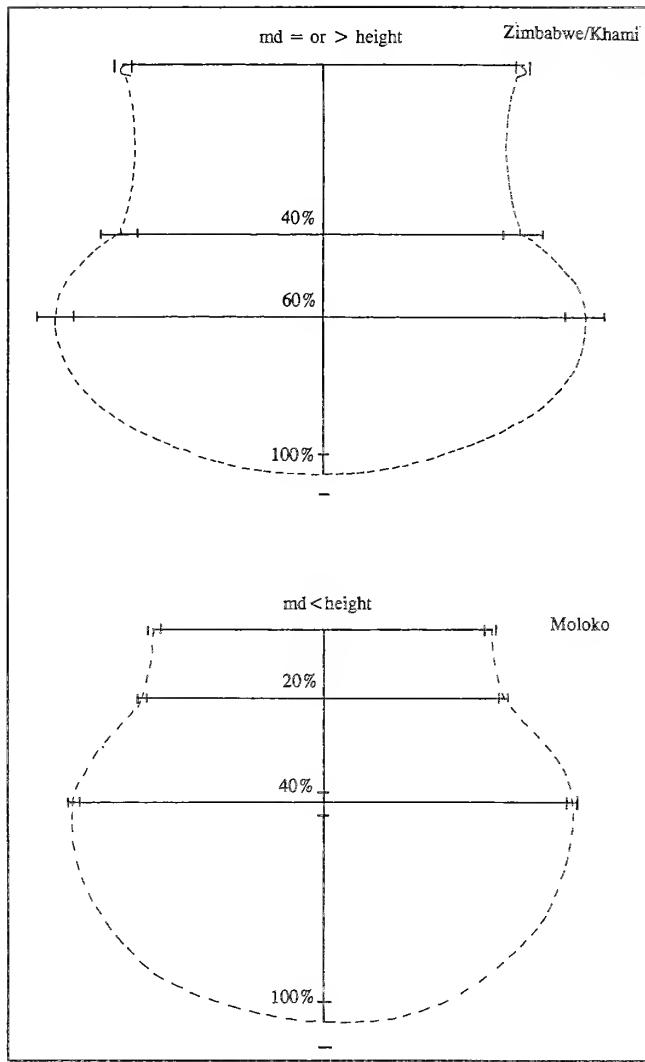


Fig. 45. Typical proportions of Zimbabwe/Khami and Moloko jars.

trench line to expose the underlying soil that was then excavated to 50 cm. The underlying soil was a light brown (7.5 YR 6/3 - 6/6), weathered gneiss, forming a well-developed Cr horizon. There was no evidence of a previous disturbance, and this feature was not a grave cairn.

Two transects were laid out across the site at right angles, centring on the house platform. Soil samples were collected at 10 m intervals and analysed for orthophosphate  $\text{PO}_4$ . The results are as follows:

Transect N - S m	$\text{PO}_4$ mg/l	Transect W - E m	$\text{PO}_4$ mg/l
0	10	0	11
10	7	10	7
20	9	20	12
30	9	30	20
50	17	50	26
60	23	60	24
70	22	70	55
80	7	80	20

Table 12. Site 119 ceramics.

Unit	Level	Total	Decoration (body sherds)	Rims
I/A	1	129	-	3 pl rims, recurved jars
I/A	2	45	-	3 pl rims, recurved jars

pl=plain

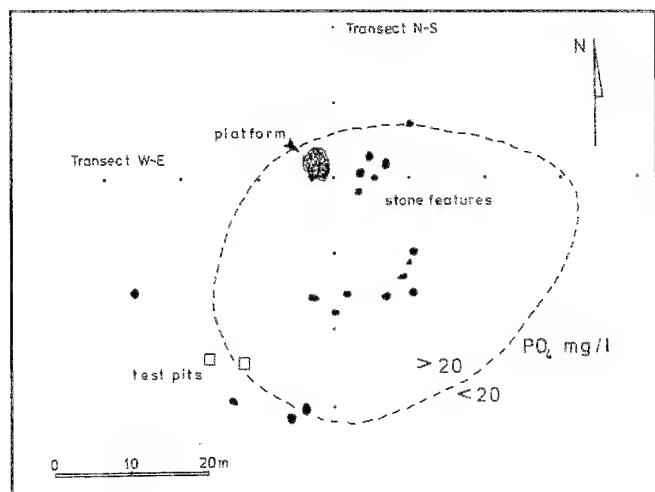


Fig. 46 Site 3, platform feature.

These values show that the central area, encompassing the house platform and most of the granary foundations, had a general  $\text{PO}_4$  level of 10 – 15 mg/l above background (10 mg/l), consistent with a nutrient concentration resulting from livestock. Figure 47 shows the spatial extent of this anomaly.

For the third task, to increase the artefact sample, we enlarged the Phase II excavation from 1  $\text{m}^2$  to 4  $\text{m}^2$ . A second 4  $\text{m}^2$  test pit was also excavated nearby. Burnt vegetation and termite tunnel casts (also noted previously) implied that some of the debris might have been introduced by bushfires. Our new excavations did not yield any identifiable plant remains.

### Finds

The house platform yielded two artefacts. One was a small globular pot with a high, slightly flared neck profile and a groove at the neck/body junction (Fig. 48). The pot was slightly burnished, but was otherwise undecorated. Although single vessels can be ambiguous, this vessel probably belongs to the Khami facies.

The second artefact was a deeply worn grindstone of coarse-grained quartzitic gneiss, measuring 165 mm long, 90 mm wide and 72 mm high. The grindstone was worn to a depth of 40 mm in a narrow, deeply curved channel. The pattern of wear showed elongated striations over the entire length of the channel, suggesting that the stone was used to

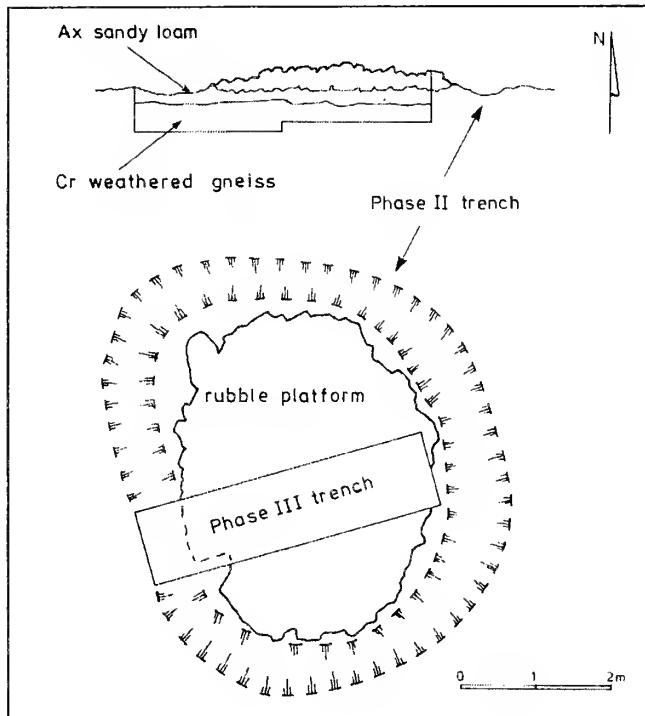


Fig. 47. Site 38, map.

sharpen metal blades rather than grinding grain. It was too small for grain in any case. Although the shape of the hollow precludes sharpening long blades, such as spears or large knives, it would be adequate for the short, slightly convex cutting edge of an axe.

Several fragments of bone attributable to bovid class IV (*cf. cattle*) also came from the platform rubble. These, together with the soil orthophosphate anomaly, confirm the presence of livestock in the settlement.

#### Preliminary Discussion

The dating evidence for Site 38 is somewhat problematic. First, the pottery is unlikely to date to the 19th century. Pottery of that late date in the wider region is characterised by globular forms with rough surface treatment (e.g., Garlake 1967), not tall necks and graphite burnish. Secondly, the Khami period state was smaller at the beginning of the 18th century than before, and there is no evidence that it extended as far west as the Motloutse at this time. Thus, either the date derives from recent carbon, or the pottery does not belong to the Khami facies. The weight of present evidence indicates that Site 38 is the remains of a Khami occupation and that the radiocarbon date is not associated.

Our observations agree with the conclusions of the Phase II team in that the house platform and granaries formed an integrated layout. Although it is reasonable to interpret the house platform as the residence of a local headman, their detailed interpretation of the site layout is speculative.

Soil orthophosphate analyses indicate dung, but the values are low in comparison to those for livestock enclosures in other sites in the project area. The close match

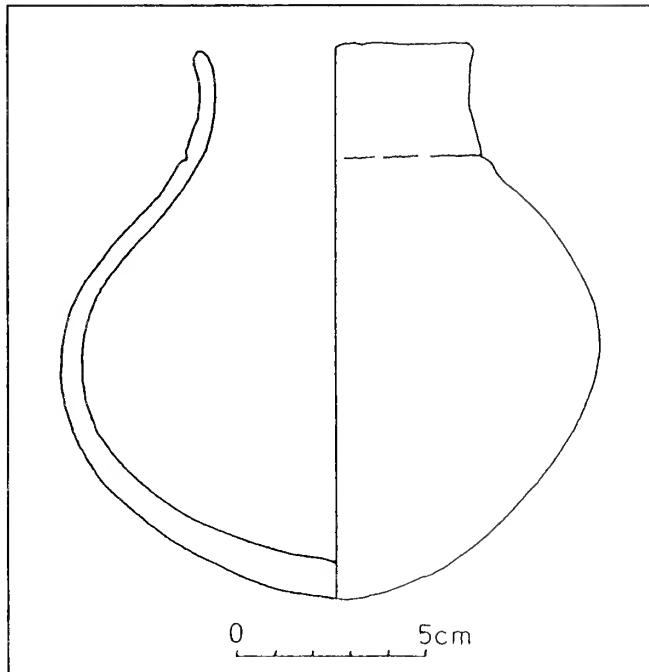


Fig. 48. Site 38, reconstructed pot from house platform rubble.

between the boundaries of the phosphate anomaly and the granary foundations may therefore indicate a cluster of huts with a dung admixture in the plaster, rather than a central livestock enclosure. This finding provides some support for the site layout proposed in the Phase II report.

Repeated and sustained occupation of the same general area in the last one hundred years by cattle posts of Mmadinare village makes it difficult to relate the vegetation and soil context of the site to the Khami occupation. However, Khami homesteads were appreciably larger than the more recent cattleposts and involved some considerable clearing to establish fields. It is therefore possible that nutrient loss through cereal cultivation reduced soil fertility to the point that thornbush became established within a short time. In this case, the present vegetation might well have started during the occupation of Site 38.

#### SITE 110 (17DC110)

The next site, Site 110, was tentatively identified as late Khami and thought to be contemporaneous with Moloko. Previous investigations recognized a Zhizo horizon, marked by burnt daga structures. Surface features comprised another horizon attributed to late Khami because of a 16th century radiocarbon date (Beta 80985) and graphite pottery. Diagnostic Khami ceramics, however, were not retrieved.

Team 2 examined the site and reassessed its archaeological affinities. First, the lapa walls on the surface place the upper horizon in the Historic period. Secondly, the pottery previously described from the test pit is most likely Moloko. And, thirdly, characteristic Zhizo pottery occurred in association with buried daga structures, as the Phase II investigations predicted. Thus Site 110 probably has three components, and the 16th century radiocarbon date

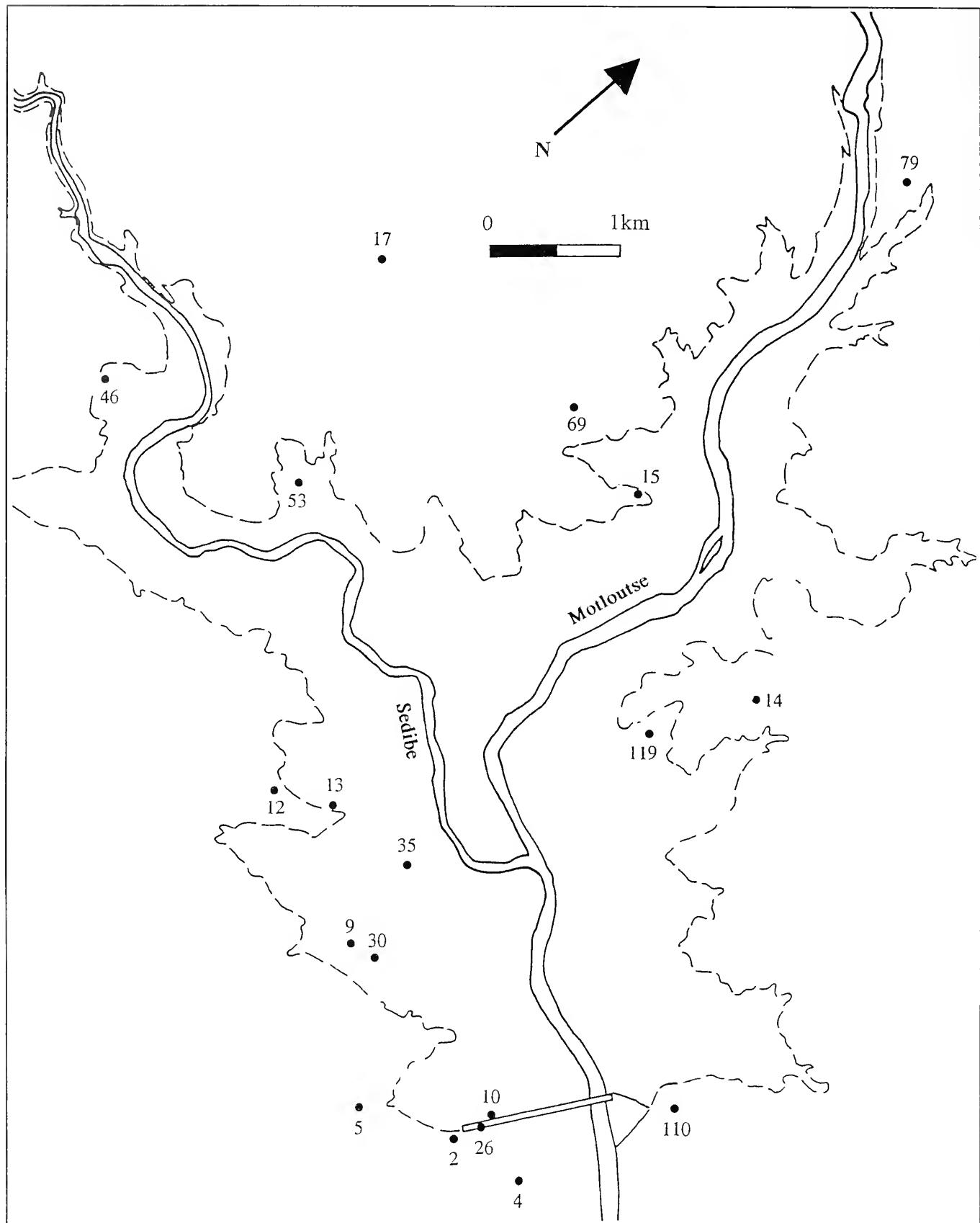


Fig. 49. Moloko sites recorded in the project area.

components, and the 16th century radiocarbon date probably refers to a middle, Moloko, occupation. We turn now to Moloko.

## MOLOKO

Early facies of the Moloko cluster can be recognised in the field by bowls with alternating bands of colour separated by

lines of textured designs made by such techniques as incision and punctuation. Dragged punctates in particular characterise the Moloko pottery found in the Phase I and II surveys. Some 17 sites contained this pottery. Of these 11 received Phase II mitigation, and six were radiocarbon dated. Two other sites, originally classified as Khami (4 & 110), should be reassigned to Moloko, bringing the number to 19 (Fig. 49).

The date from Site 46 is an AMS reading of bone collagen, but there is little reason to question the result. The date from Site 119 was placed in context in the preceding Khami section: it is probably associated with a date from Site 119 placed in context in the preceding Khami section: it is probably associated with a 19th or 20th century occupation. The remaining dates are sufficiently close to Khami period sites to make the Phase II investigators wonder if Moloko and Khami settlements were contemporaneous. Investigating this possibility at Site 46 was a prime task of Team 2. Another priority was to increase the ceramic samples.

Site	Lab No.	a.d.	Calibrated AD
2	Beta 80092	1590±70	1475-1655
26	Beta 81225	1670±70	1640-1680/1805
46	Beta 80093 (AMS)	1670±100	1515-1695/1815
79A	Beta 80094	1550±70	1450-1645
119	Beta 80096	1840±60	1695-1725/1935
127	Beta 81224	1590±70	1475-1655
<b>reassigned</b>			
4	Beta 80979 (AMS)	1470±60	1425-1485
110	Beta 80985	1580±90	1455-1660

#### Site 46 (17DC46)

This site (21.50.23S; 27.40.10E) centred on a bare granite gneiss outcrop (Fig. 50) south and west of a bend in the Sedibe River. A Khami-type terrace platform stood on the north side, while Moloko pottery occurred to the south. Numerous grain bin foundations, terrace platforms and probable hut areas encircled the kopje. Two small excavations in the Moloko deposits conducted during Phase II produced the bone collagen AMS date (Beta 80093) of the 17th century. It was Team 2's task to study this Moloko occupation and the relationship between Khami and Moloko. Excavations began on August 11 and ended on the 13th.

#### Method

We laid out a north/south datum line across the saddle in order to connect a midden deposit with a possible residential terrace (Fig. 51).

#### Midden

Trench I/A, a 2 x 3 m excavation, exposed dark midden soil that had formed on top of a bare rock dome and in rock cracks. The midden reached a depth of 17 cm. Excavated as a unit, the midden yielded much bone, warthog teeth and diagnostic Moloko pottery.

#### Natural Terraces

Trench I/C, 1 x 3 m, reached bedrock at 9 to 12 cm. Excavated in 5cm levels, only three sherds were found in level 1.

Trench II/B, 1 x 3 m, was excavated on the natural terrace southwest of the midden (Fig. 52). Some 5 cm of light greyish brown hill wash lay on top of a darker greyish brown village horizon that was 8 to 14 cm thick. Underneath was a thin lens of brown soil on top of a rubble substratum.

This stratigraphic sequence was excavated in 5 cm levels except that level 3 in the village horizon was 10 cm thick. Daga lumps, bone, a zebra tooth and Moloko pottery came from this horizon.

We placed Trench III/A on a higher terrace to the west near a previous Phase II excavation. Ultimately, only a 1 m square was excavated. About 8 cm of light greyish brown hill wash lay on top of a darker grey brown soil 9 to 14 cm thick. The rocky substratum then began, 17 to 22 cm below present ground level. We excavated the square in 5 cm levels.

Finds
<u>Bone and Shell</u>
One mandibular tooth from a zebra came from the village horizon in Trench II/B/3. The midden in I/A yielded some eight warthog teeth, probably from the same animal. There was also one premolar that may be from small stock. In addition, <i>Achatina</i> sp. (land snail) was also incorporated in the midden. The edge of one large fragment was worn smooth, and it had probably been used for scraping.
<u>Ceramics</u>

#### Bone and Shell

One mandibular tooth from a zebra came from the village horizon in Trench II/B/3. The midden in I/A yielded some eight warthog teeth, probably from the same animal. There was also one premolar that may be from small stock. In addition, *Achatina* sp. (land snail) was also incorporated in the midden. The edge of one large fragment was worn smooth, and it had probably been used for scraping.

#### Ceramics

Most pottery sherds came from Trench I in the midden, although II/B and III/A yielded a few more. The total collection contains six types (Figs 53 & 54):

Type 2: recurved jar with or without beaded rim, straight to inward sloping neck, sharp neck/shoulder junction sometimes with a single line of incision but without the graphite or dark burnish;

Type 5: bowl with bands of alternating colour separated by dragged punctates, stamping or bangle impression;

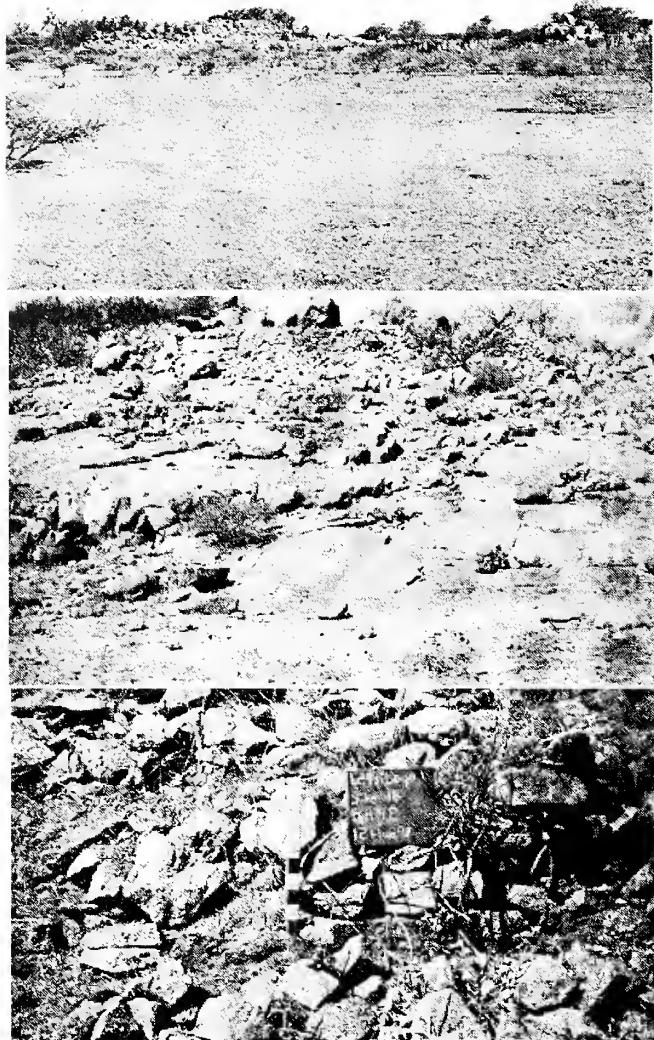


Fig. 50. Site 46: (above) outcrop from south; (middle) Khami-phase platform on north side of outcrop; (lower) remnants of coursing on platform.

Type 6: recurved jar with short inward sloping neck;

Type 7 (fragmentary type): recurved jar with short neck and decoration on upper shoulder with band of punctuates;

Type 8: thick (7-10 mm) open to incurved bowls.

In addition there are a few sherds with fragmentary decoration similar to that found on Type 5. These sherds and Types 5 to 8 form a Moloko assemblage. There is only one example of Type 2, diagnostic of the Zimbabwe/Khami cluster. This one vessel came from the bottom of Trench III, underneath Moloko pottery (Table 13).

#### Preliminary Discussion

The evidence, although slight, indicates that the Khami occupation preceded Moloko. Both ceramics and settlement organization support this interpretation. First, the one clear Zimbabwe/Khami vessel lay below Moloko in Trench III. Secondly, the Khami platform faces out to the north, and it

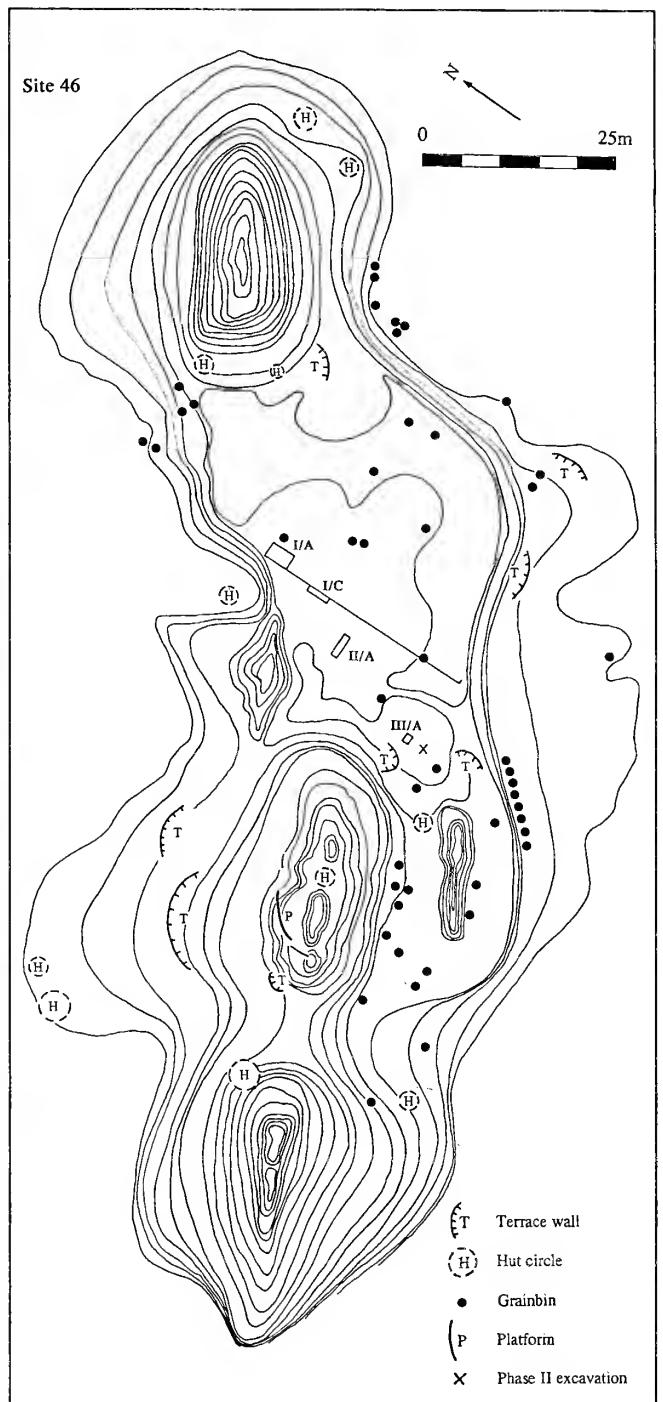


Fig. 51. Site 46, map.

was probably approached from the west. The excavated area therefore lies behind. In the Zimbabwe Pattern, the front platform would have marked the office of the leader, while the back area was reserved for ritual activities and the private residence of the leader's youngest wife. Because of this organization, if the Khami and Moloko occupations were contemporaneous, then the midden in Trench I would have contained Khami as well as Moloko pottery.

The later Moloko settlement should have followed the Central Cattle Pattern. If this was the case, then the midden and associated grain bin stands were located at the back, and the settlement faced southeasterly. This orientation is opposite to the earlier Khami settlement, and the difference emphasizes the distinctive character of the two occupations.

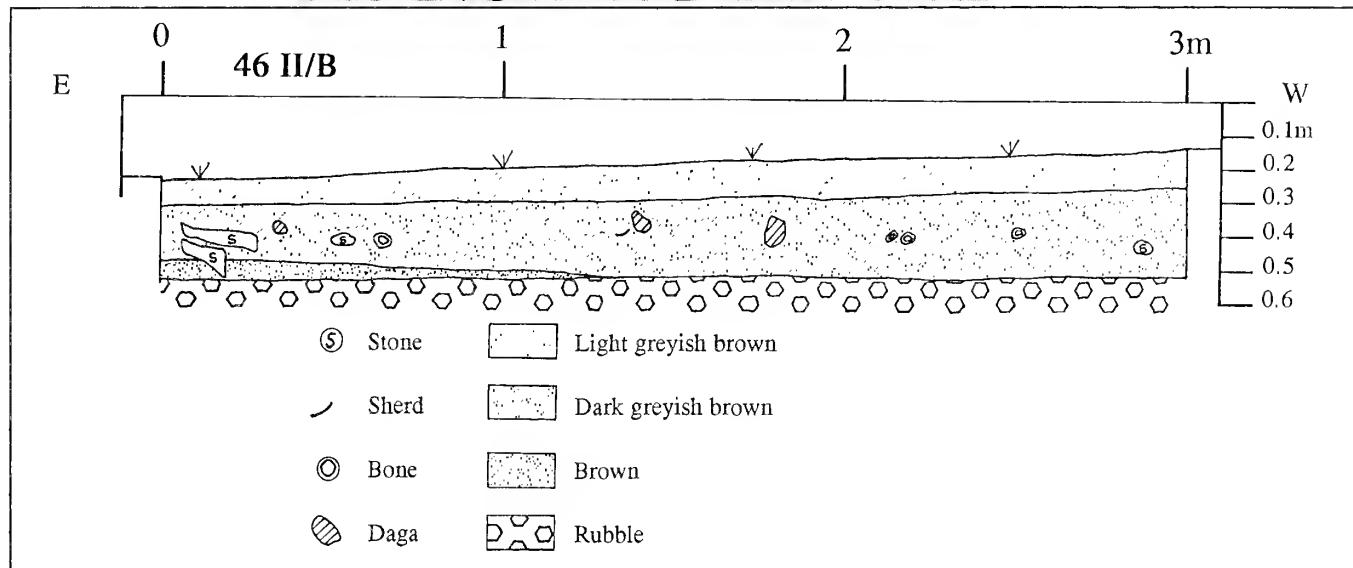


Fig. 52. Site 46: (above) view from the north; (below) section of south wall of Trench II/B.

Table 13. Site 46 Ceramics.

Unit	Level	Total	Decoration (body sherds)	Rims
Surface		34	2 Type 5 1 punctate fragment	1 Type 8 1 punctate fragment 1 sp fragment 3 pl rims, recurved jars 1 pl. bowl fragment
I/A	I	318	2 Type 5 1 Type 7	1 Type 5 8 Type 8 9 Type 6 2 gb jar fragments
I/C	I	3	-	-
II/B	I	-	-	-
II/B	2	33	-	1 Type 6 1 pl bowl fragment
II/B	3	86	1 Type 7	1 Type 5 1 Type 8 1 Type 6 1 pl rim, recurved jar
II/B	4	24	1 Type 5	1 Type 6
IIIA	I	23	-	1 Type 6
IIIA	2	29	-	1 Type 6
III/A	3	32	1 Type 5 fragment	1 Type 2 1 Type 6

gb=graphite burnish pl=plain sp=stabbed punctuate

## DISCUSSION

The mitigation programme resolved various issues of culture history and lifeways. The first concerns the Zhizo phase. The calibrated radiocarbon dates from Zhizo sites at Letsibogo fall within the range established for the wider region.

### Project area

Letsibogo Site 19	970-1020
Letsibogo Site 30A	790-950
Letsibogo Site 109	790-950

### Wider region

Doddiburn	895-1020
Glennel	895-1015
Pont Drift 1	960-1015
Pont Drift 2	890-1000
Schroda	890-970
	885-990
	895-1000
	960-1015
	1005-1020
Taukome	690-895
	715-960

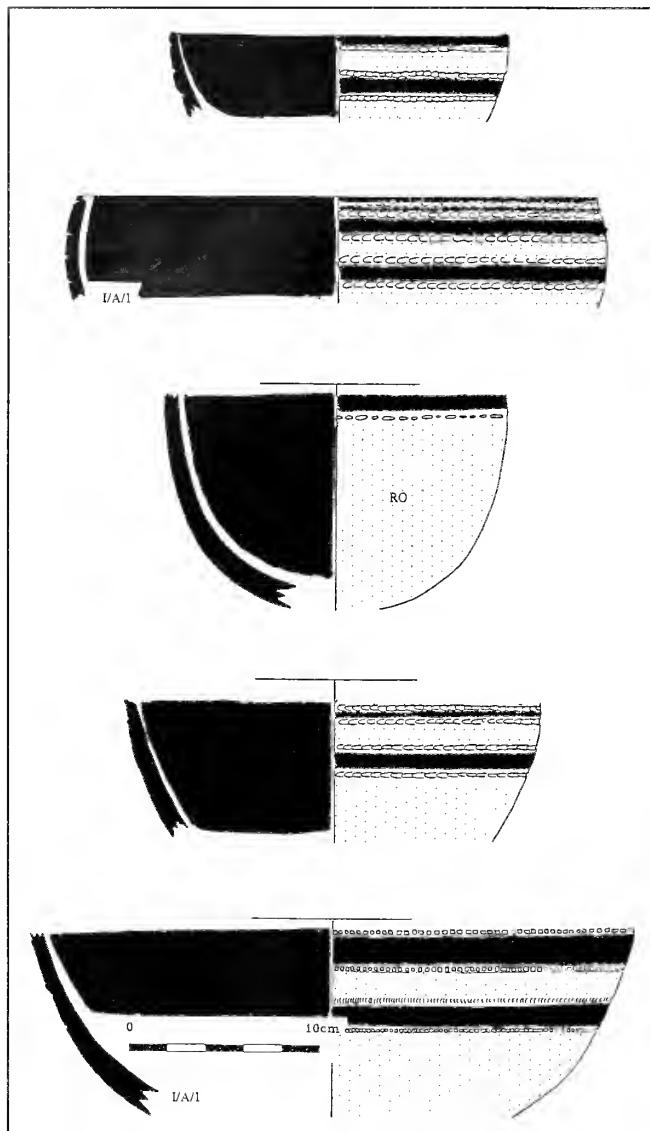


Fig. 53. Site 46, pottery: Type 5.

Unfortunately, this evidence does not allow us to date more precisely the Zhizo occupation in the project area. All Zhizo settlements here may have formed neighbouring groups, but without precise dating this point cannot be confirmed. If those settlements were contemporaneous, then they probably dated to between AD 900 and 1000.

Neither the Phase I, II nor III investigations established the precise organisation of a Zhizo settlement. Team 1's research at Site 30B, however, clarified the construction, and destruction, of a typical feature. Previous investigators thought that Zhizo villagers had purposefully fire-hardened their grain bin floors. Team 1, however, showed that the burning was later. Although this study does not resolve the same question about other Early Iron Age granaries, it does establish the appropriate methodology.

After the Zhizo population left the area, Letsibogo remained unoccupied for some 400 years, at least by farming communities. This is one of the important results of the previous investigations. The redating and reclassification of Site 125 emphasizes the hiatus even further.

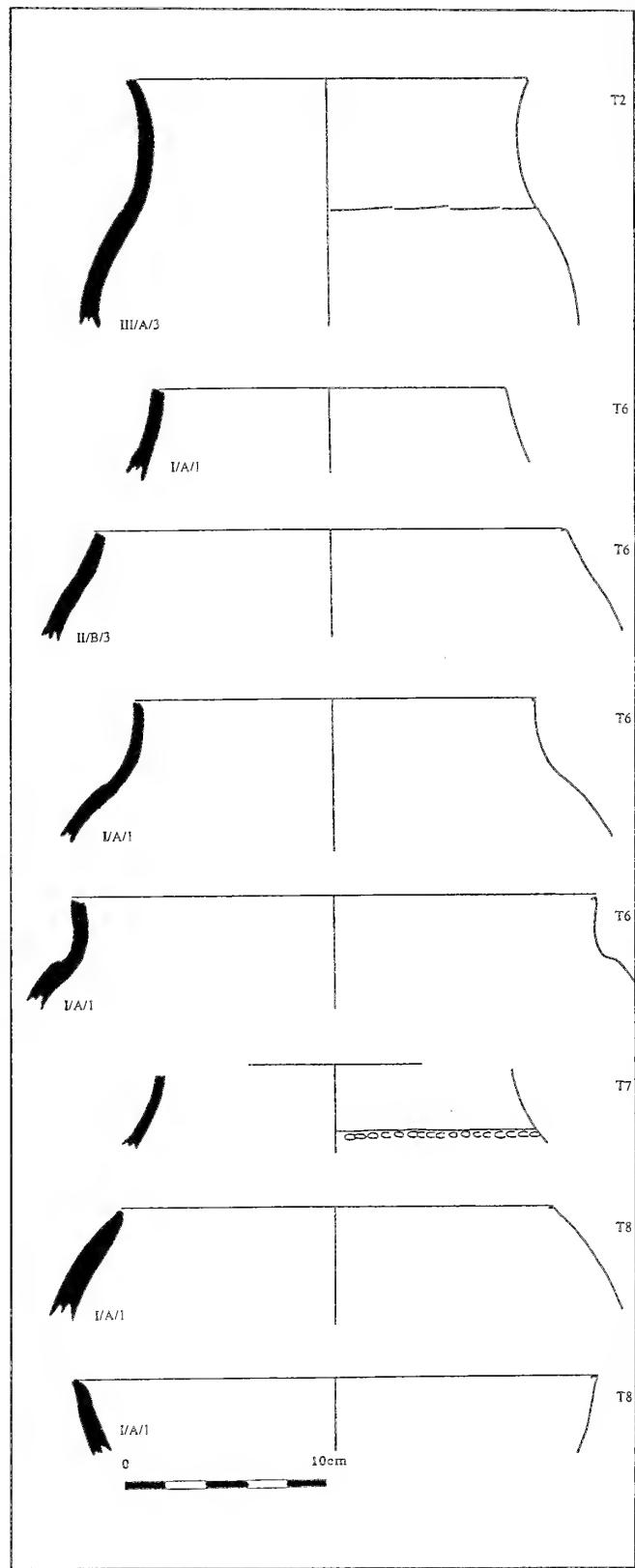


Fig. 54. Site 46, pottery: Type 2 to 8.

Ceramic sequences in the wider area place the hiatus into perspective. The successors to Zhizo in Botswana, the Toutswe facies, clustered in the Palapye area (Denbow 1983), but a few sites were found about 30 km south of Letsibogo during the survey for the North-South Carrier (Reid 1996). All these sites date from about AD 1000 to

1300. This same period encompasses the Leopard's Kopje cluster in the Shashe-Limpopo basin. A Leopard's Kopje site is on record near Bobonong (Kinahan *et al.* 1998), but neither Leopard's Kopje nor Toutswé people inhabited the project area.

Environmentally, this period was suitable for agriculture elsewhere, for example the Shashe-Limpopo Valley. Perhaps the Letsibogo area harboured tsetse fly. On the other hand, the cause may have been political, and Letsibogo may have been a 'no-man's-land' or a royal hunting area. Such areas are well known in southern Africa. Today, for example, the Swazi monarch maintains a wilderness reserve in the mountainous country next to the Komati River, while in early historic times, Lobengula kept a hilly area along the Khame River west of Bulawayo as his private preserve (Robinson 1959:2).

In north eastern Namibia the 19th century chief of the Mbukushu maintained an exclusive hunting preserve near Mohembo, an area marked by an abrupt break in the distribution of archaeological remains from that period (Kinahan 1986).

To assess the likelihood of a wilderness around Letsibogo, one should consider events in the Shashe-Limpopo Valley. There, ivory dominated the trade economy throughout the Zhizo period and into K2 times. After some 200 years of hunting, however, elephants would have been eliminated, or they would have moved away. By about AD 1100, large numbers of K2 farmers had moved to the edge of the floodplains to cultivate the rich agricultural land (Huffman 2000). By this time, then, few elephants could have survived in the immediate region, yet the ivory trade appears to have remained important (Voigt 1983: 79). Thus, some river systems that were optima elephant country, such as the Motloutse, may have been purposefully kept as wilderness.

Later, as the reclassification of Site 125 makes clear, Shona-speaking people from Zimbabwe reoccupied Letsibogo. The ceramic assemblage at Site 125 is the same as those at 86 and the 119 Complex reported here, and many others documented in the earlier investigations (Fig. 55). The three dated sites span a relatively short period.

Site 79B	1420-1505
Site 86	1400-1445
Site 125	1420-1445

This short period dates to the end of Great Zimbabwe and the transfer of political power to Khami. On dating alone, then, it is not clear whether the Letsibogo settlements belong to the Zimbabwe or Khami phase.

The style of walling at Sites 70 and 46 appears to be more typical of Khami than Zimbabwe. Certainly, one ceramic vessel from Site 30B belongs to Khami, and the excavated assemblages reported here are more Khami than Zimbabwe. Together the ceramic and walling evidence suggest the settlements date to the beginning of the Khami phase. Thus they date to between AD 1420 and 1450, or at the most to between AD 1400 and 1500.

The distribution of these Khami settlements suggests they belonged to a single chiefdom. This is another important result of the Phase III investigations. As neighbours, Sites 125, 86 and 119 formed a community of commoners under the political influence of a royal leader. In the Zimbabwe culture, and indeed throughout southern Africa, the unequal distribution of wealth was one of the pillars of leadership (Huffman 1986a). As a consequence, leaders were the wealthiest people, and they had the largest settlements. At Letsibogo this was Site 70, above the confluence of the Sedibe and Motloutse rivers. Royal settlements such as this functioned as administrative centres, and Site 70 was most likely the capital of a petty chief. Smaller sites with similar walling, such as Sites 16 and 48, were probably the homesteads of royal headmen. Their placement on different sides of the Sedibe is also typical of neighbourhood divisions within a chiefdom. The chief's capital itself is usually located near poor agricultural land, leaving the best for the commoners to cultivate. Site 70 fits this pattern. This small capital may have been independent. If not, one of the larger stonewalled settlements near Selebi-Phikwe was probably the district centre.

According to the ethnographic literature, the settlement of a petty chief, such as Site 70, typically sheltered 300 to 500 people, while the settlements of headmen and commoners housed 60 to 100 people, half of them children (Huffman 1986a). On this basis there were probably some 2700 to 4700 people living in the Letsibogo area during the Khami period.

It was possible for this population to live at Letsibogo because of a warm pulse during the Little Ice Age (Tyson & Lindesay 1992). Our phytolith analyses provide partial support for this wetter climate. The phytolith concentrations in the dung at Sites 119B and 125 demonstrate that there had been an extensive grass cover for an extended period. For such a cover, the average rainfall needs to be higher than today. Furthermore, clayey soils, such as those in the reservoir area, need higher rainfall than sandy soils to release their nutrients. The grass composition also has environmental significance, but unfortunately phytolith analyses can identify tribes of grasses but seldom species. Within the Arundinoideae two genera, *Aristida* and *Stipagrostis*, probably account for most of the background phytoliths. *Aristida* species are mostly unpalatable, and often dominate pastures under severe grazing pressure. However, some *Stipagrostis* species are important fodder in semi-arid areas. Within the Chloridoideae, three genera are wide-spread, palatable and common in the area now: *Chloris*, *Cynodon* and *Eragrostis*. The Panicoideae grasses of importance today include *Panicum* and *Cenchrus*. *Cenchrus* is a pioneer species that prefers disturbed and enriched soils, such as abandoned kraals, and archaeologists use it as an ecological indicator of Iron Age sites (Denbow 1979). *Cenchrus* and other pioneer species grow in areas that are seasonally overgrazed; this situation probably applied to the entire reservoir area during the Khami occupation.

The charcoal results are compatible with this interpre-

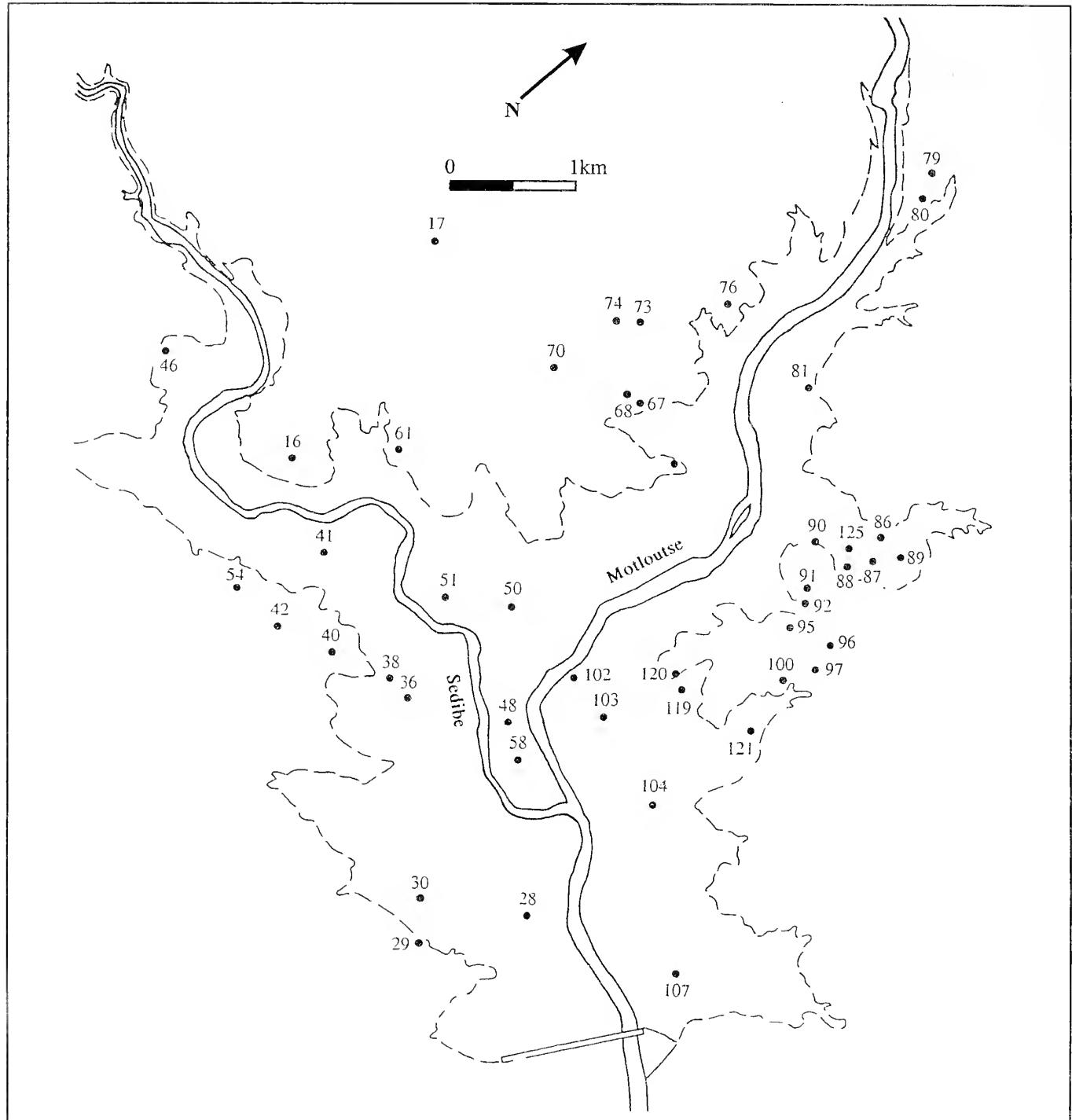


Fig. 55. All Khami sites recorded in the project area.

tation. The *Acacia* species reflect clayey soils and disturbed habitats. *A. karroo*, in particular, is not only a pioneer species but contributes to bush encroachment around fields, waterholes and homesteads where pastures are degraded and viable reserves of soil nutrients are too deep for the roots of most grasses. For herds to prosper in an overgrazed area, seasonal rainfall must be sufficiently regular to regenerate grass growth and sufficiently widespread to permit resting of pasture reserves during the growing period.

The faunal remains provide a third line of evidence. The

species list from Site 79B (excavated by Mason and analysized by Brown) includes reedbuck that prefer riparian grassland and hippo that require at least standing pools (Smithers 1986). Even if one removes the impact of present day farming and urban centres, conditions would have to be wetter to support these species.

The numerous grain bins on the sites in the reservoir area provide a fourth line of evidence for higher rainfall. The common domestic grains include sorghum and two millets, *Pennisetum* and *Eleusine*. They have varying requirements, but if grown together, the fields need a minimum

of 350 mm of rain in the summer growing season (Doggett 1976; Purseglove 1976). Essentially, they cannot grow with less than about 3 mm of water a day: 50 days for the millets and 75 days for sorghum. To meet these requirements, the minimum annual rainfall needs to be about 500 mm. This amount is about 100 mm more than the Letsibogo area receives today. Whatever the actual amount, one can be confident that the Khami occupation could have only taken place if successful agriculture was possible. The numerous grain bin foundations at Sites 86, 119B and 125, to note a few, suggest that harvests were abundant.

Excavations of the commoner sites uncovered other data pertaining to lifeways. In particular, cattle kraals were more typical than previously thought. The apparent absence of kraals in other commoner sites is probably due to sampling and post-depositional processes. The location of the kraals and grain bins in turn shows that the commoner sites were organized according to the principles of the Central Cattle Pattern. This conclusion parallels results from other excavations outside the reservoir area (e.g., Van Waarden 1989). We can therefore be confident that the cattle kraals belonged to the domain of men, while grain bins and middens were part of the residential zone associated with women. Virtually every excavation of commoner sites uncovered middens among the grain bins. The separate nature of many middens suggests they were formed from the domestic rubbish of individual households. This association is not the case in all settlements with the Central Cattle Pattern, and it may represent a minor but regular variation in social organization.

Another aspect of this pattern concerns metalworking. As is well known, iron smelting took place in seclusion, usually outside the settlement, while smithing was a public activity conducted in the men's area. Recent archaeological data show that metal workers smelted copper at the back of settlements. For example, Feature 28 was a small furnace in the Zhizo level at Leopard's Kopje Main Kraal (Huffman 1974), copper was worked in the residential zone of K2 (Murimbika, pers. comm. 2002) and at least two 17th century Moloko settlements in the Madikwe Game Reserve contained copper furnaces behind the houses (Huffman, *et al.* 1997). Now in some areas today, African societies associate iron with men and copper with women for such reasons as malleability and colour (Herbert 1984). The two furnaces at Site 125, then, are part of a widespread pattern that archaeologists are only now beginning to recognize.

Moloko sherds in one midden at Site 119B and a few Khami sherds at Site 79A lead us to the next main issue of the mitigation programme, the relationship between Khami and Moloko. We begin with identification and origins.

The Phase I report hypothesized that the Early Iron Age Zhizo style evolved into Moloko. The proposed transitional style contained contrasting black and red colouring separated by combstamping that later became stabbed punctates. The investigators tested this hypothesis during Phase II excavations and then withdrew it once radiocarbon dates placed Moloko some 500 years after Zhizo.

For methodological purposes it is worth noting that this

hypothesis is not possible for ceramic reasons, regardless of the dating. First, the transitional phase is based on isolated features and pottery fragments, rather than multidimensional types and whole vessels. Secondly, analyses based on accurate procedures demonstrate that Zhizo itself was derived from Gokomere (Huffman 1974; Robinson 1966).

It then developed into Toutswe in Botswana (Denbow 1982, 1983; Huffman 1984) and into Leokwe in the Shashe-Limpopo basin (Calabrese 2000). These neighbouring sequences establish the direction that ceramic change took over a 500-year period (Fig. 56). Significantly, sequences in related branches in the Harare and Victoria Falls areas demonstrate parallel directions of change (Huffman 1989). These parallel sequences provide empirical justification for the principle that ceramic change is conditioned by the previous style: tradition affects the future. Thus, ceramic change over time is not random.

For this reason it is not possible for the Gokomere-Zhizo sequence to have evolved into Toutswe and Leokwe, and also into Moloko: Moloko has markedly different motif combinations and stylistic types and therefore belongs to a separate stylistic tradition.

The Moloko sequence is now better documented. Now known as Letsibogo, the Moloko pottery at Site 46 is similar to a dated assemblage from Millbank in the Makabeng of South Africa (Van Schalkwyk 2001). These assemblages belong to the second phase of Moloko (Fig. 57), derived directly from Icon (Huffman 2002). The earliest phase occurs (Fig. 58) in the Limpopo Province of South Africa (Evers & Van der Merwe 1987; Fish 1999; Hanisch 1979; Loubser 1991).

## Phase 1 Moloko

Icon	1310-1415
Matoks	1400-1435
Tavhatshena	1290-1415
Nkgaru	1325-1425
Nagome 3	1295-1400
Ficus	1435-1495
	1470-1640

Second phase pottery in the project area is associated with 15th to 17th centuries calibrated dates (Fig. 59).

## Phase 2 Moloko

Letsibogo	
2	1475-1655
4	1425-1485
26	1640-1680
46	1520-1690
79A	1450-1690
110	1455-1660
127	1475-1655
Millbank	1505-1635
	1650-1675
	1650-1680

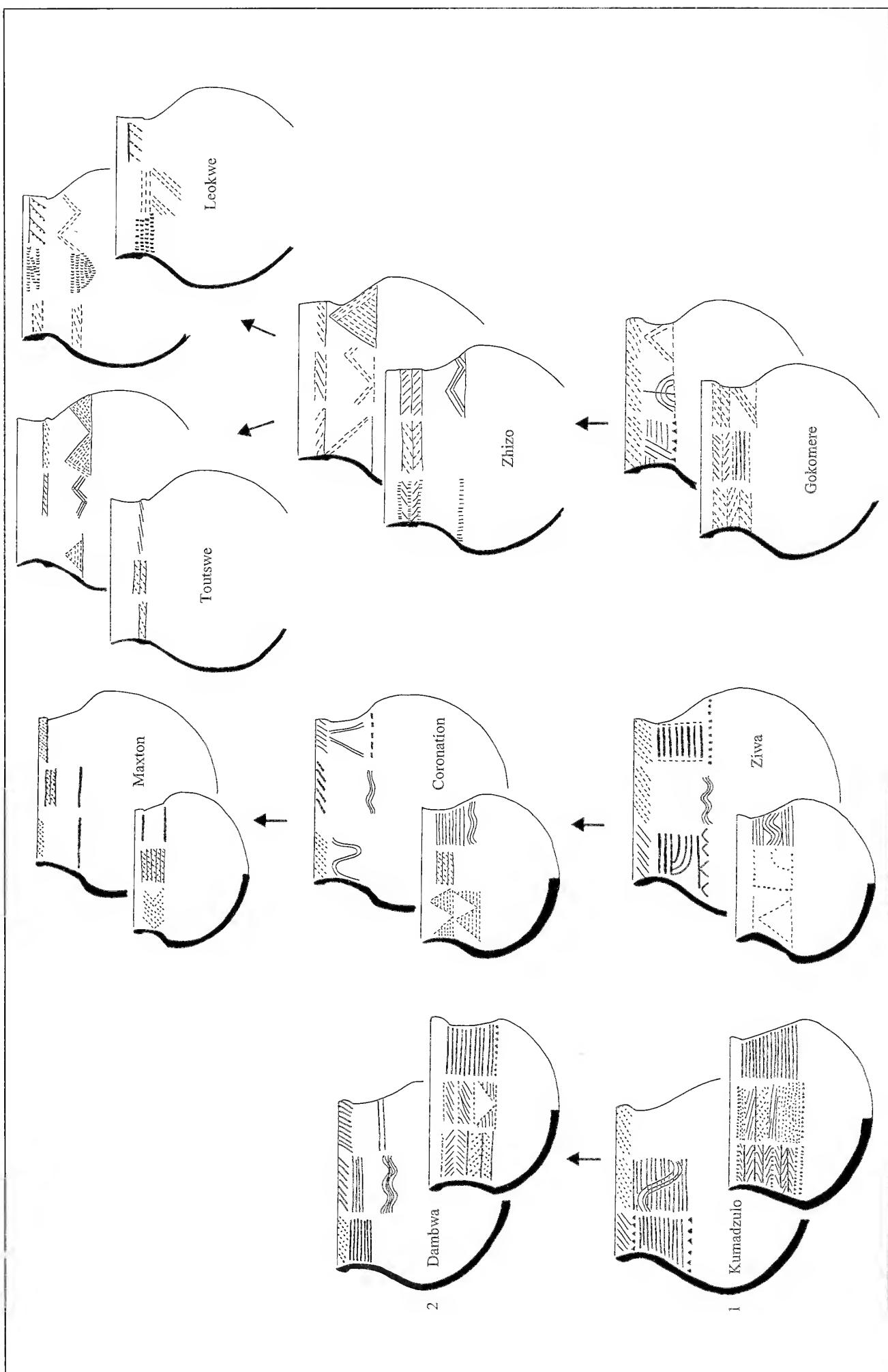


Fig. 57. Sequence of ceramic facies in the Moloko cluster (after Huffman 2002).

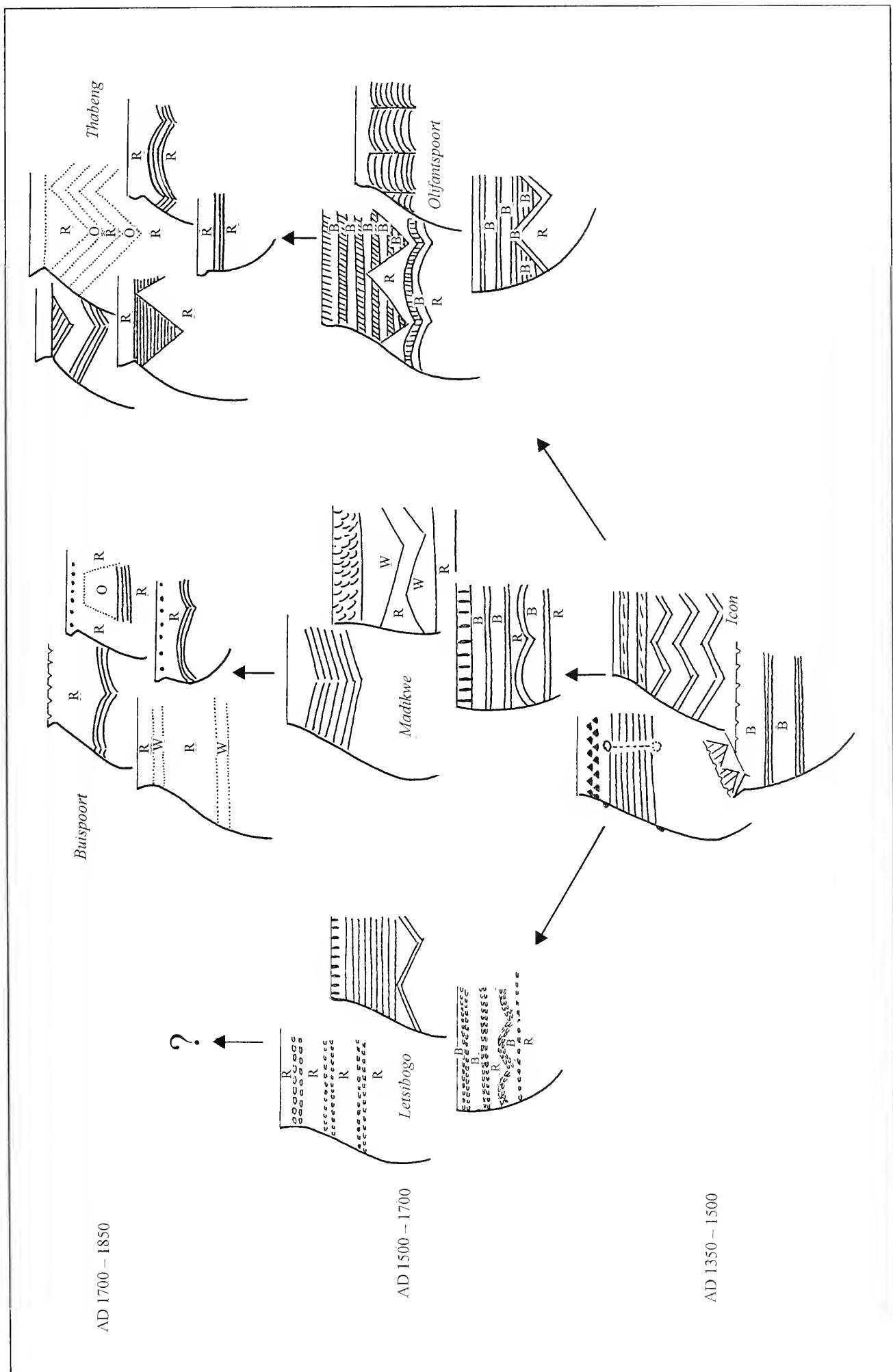


Fig. 56. Sequence of ceramic facies in neighbouring sub-branches in the Nkope Branch of the Urewe Tradition. Note the continuity in motifs and design layout.

For culture history purposes the time span of the Letsibogo facies is important to establish. Historic Sotho-Tswana pottery in the collection of the National Museum, Monuments and Art Gallery of Botswana differs from Letsibogo in that alternating bands of contrasting colour are absent. In fact, on present evidence Letsibogo cannot be connected to any historic Sotho-Tswana style, and Letsibogo appears to have been absorbed by another tradition. The upper limits of the calibrated radiocarbon dates from Letsibogo and Millbank, minus 19th to 20th century segments, are probably a reasonable estimate of the end of the facies. The small gap between the earlier Icon phase and the oldest Letsibogo dates provides an estimate for the beginning. On this basis then, Letsibogo Moloko probably dates from about AD 1500 to 1700 (Fig. 60).

Now that we know the range of dates for Letsibogo, we can better understand Khami-Moloko interaction in the region. Other than the AMS bone date from Site 4, the Phase 2 dates are slightly more recent than the Khami settlements. When one considers the variability between radiocarbon laboratories, these dates probably represent a later occupation of the Letsibogo area. This conclusion is supported by the stratigraphic evidence at Site 119A and Site 46 (as well as Site 79A and Site 79B excavated by Team 3), where in all cases Moloko pottery overlay Khami. The few Moloko sherds at 119B, on the other hand, support the complementary conclusion that Moloko people could have lived in the general region when Khami people occupied Letsibogo. Indeed, at the Majande Ruins near Bobonong less than 50 kilometres south (Tsheboeng 1990), the stratigraphy suggests that the Khami walling was built on top of a Letsibogo occupation. In neither case, however, is there evidence for prolonged interaction. Finally, it is important to remember that the amalgamation in the Soutpansberg that led to the new Venda style (Loubser 1992) occurred during the earlier Icon phase. The interaction in the Letsibogo area, whatever it may have been, was later and certainly less intense.

In addition to culture history and lifeways, our investigations considered post-depositional processes and the relevance of Iron Age settlements as benchmarks of environmental history.

Until now, local and regional culture histories have been the main purpose of most archaeological mitigations in southern Africa. There is a compelling reason to broaden the scope of such enquiries. Countries such as Botswana, depending on natural forage supported by erratic rainfall, are often accused of hastening environmental degradation through agropastoralism (*cf.* Abel 1993; Bienert 1996; Biot 1993).

Critics of this conventional view, on the other hand, call for reliable long-term data (*eg.*, Leach & Mearns 1996). Archaeological studies can obviously improve our understanding of the environmental impact of agropastoral practices, but the terms of reference for impact studies and mitigation need to be broadened. In particular, there is a need to move from site-specific to broad area-based studies, since subsistence agropastoralism is an extensive land use

system. Ideally, Phase I and Phase II studies need to identify clusters of farming settlements that can be simultaneously investigated during Phase III.

An integrated approach (see Stromquist *et al.* 2000) should estimate intensity, duration, productivity and impact of agropastoral settlement. The first of these requires systematic survey data, such as the Letsibogo project produced for the Khami period. The second requires not only firm dating, but also some estimation of settlement duration, taking into account post-depositional processes that reduce the quantity of archaeological material. Productivity estimates should consider soil fertility, granary numbers and numbers of stock. And finally, impact estimates require that archaeological data should be integrated with evidence of soil erosion and vegetation change. At present, the results of archaeological research are seldom used to their full potential.

### End notes

1. Area a comprises Trenches y9x31x, y9x40, y7.5x35, y22x20, y9x34, y30x60, y15x40.
2. Area b comprises Trenches y18x34, y21x40, y15x40, y15x50, y30x34, y22x44, y21x50, y24x34, y18x44, y24x44, y21x50, y15x50.
3. Area c comprises Trenches y39x44, y42x34, y39x44, y36x34, y52x37, y45x43, y48x34, y54x34, y61x34.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank the four archaeological students from the University of Botswana and our local labour. John Calabrese, Mandy Esterhuysen and Jeannette Smith supervised them at various times. We also thank Andy Brown and Earl Robinson for their help with the analyses, and the National Museum and Art Gallery for their cooperation and support. Paul Larkin of Aqua Tech Groundwater Consultants directed the overall project.

### REFERENCES

Abel, N.O.J. 1993. Reducing cattle numbers on southern African range: is it worth it? In: Behnke, R.H., Scoones, I., & Kerven, C. (eds) Range ecology at disequilibrium: new models of natural variability and pastoral adaptation in African savannas: 173-195. London: Overseas Development Institute.

Beach, D.N. 1980. The Shona and Zimbabwe 900-1850. Gwelo, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press.

Beinert, W. 1996. Soil erosion animals and pasture over the longer term: environmental destruction in southern Africa. In: Leach, M. & Mearns, R. (eds) The lie of the land: challenging received wisdom on the African environment: 54-72. The International African Institute.

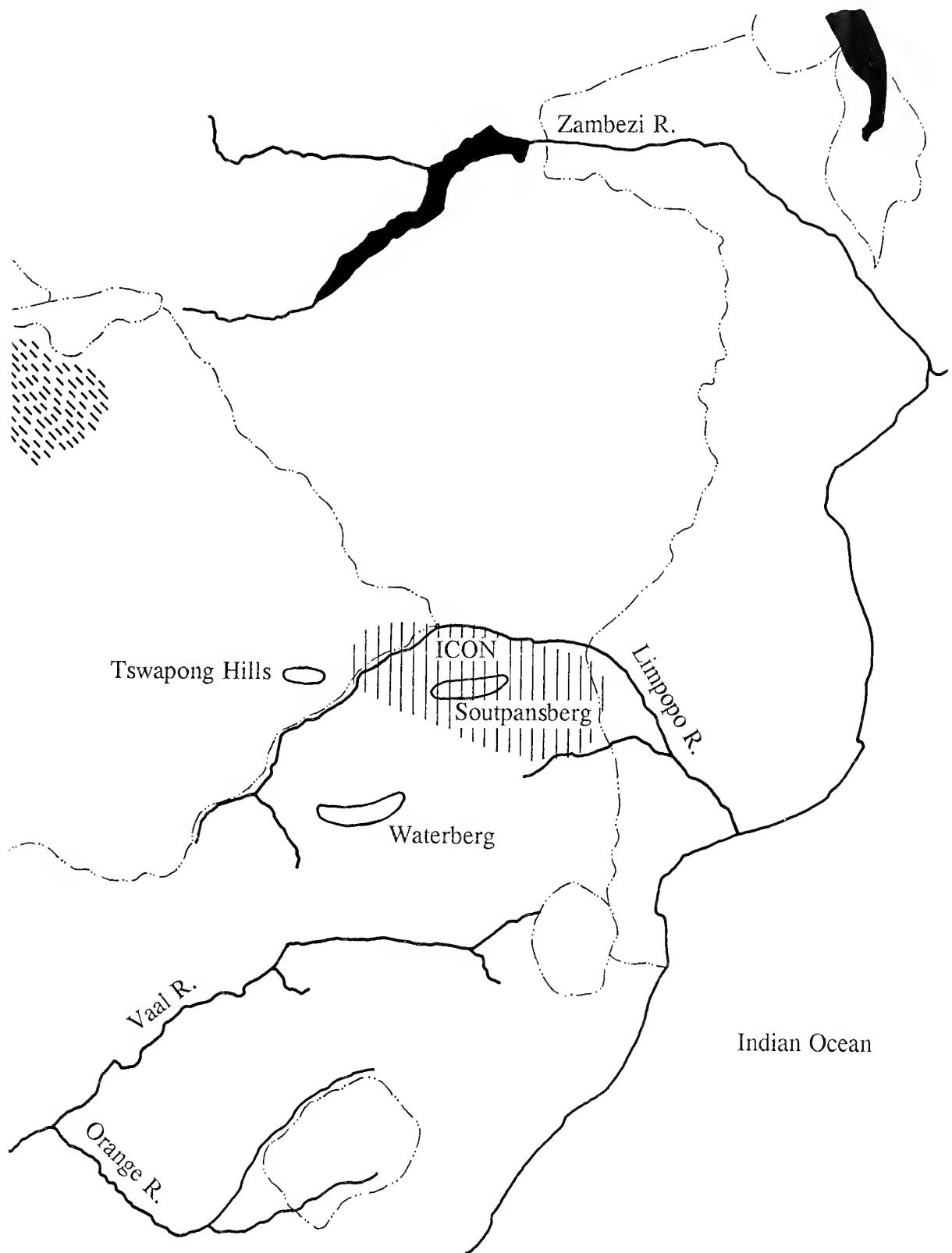


Fig. 58. Known distribution of the Icon facies of Moloko (after Huffman 2002).

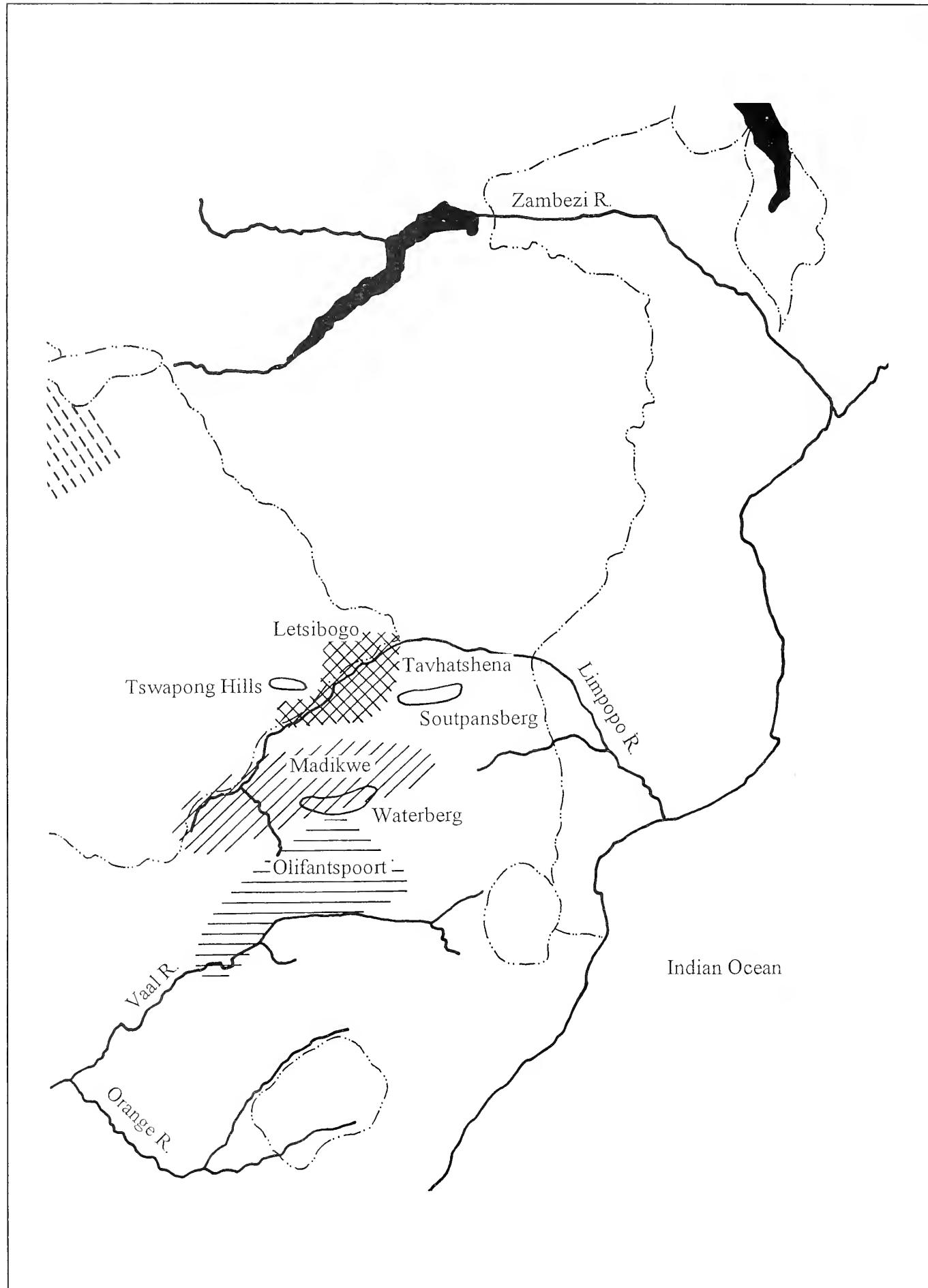


Fig. 59. Known distribution of the Letsibogo, Madikwe and Olifantspoort facies of Moloko (after Huffman 2002).

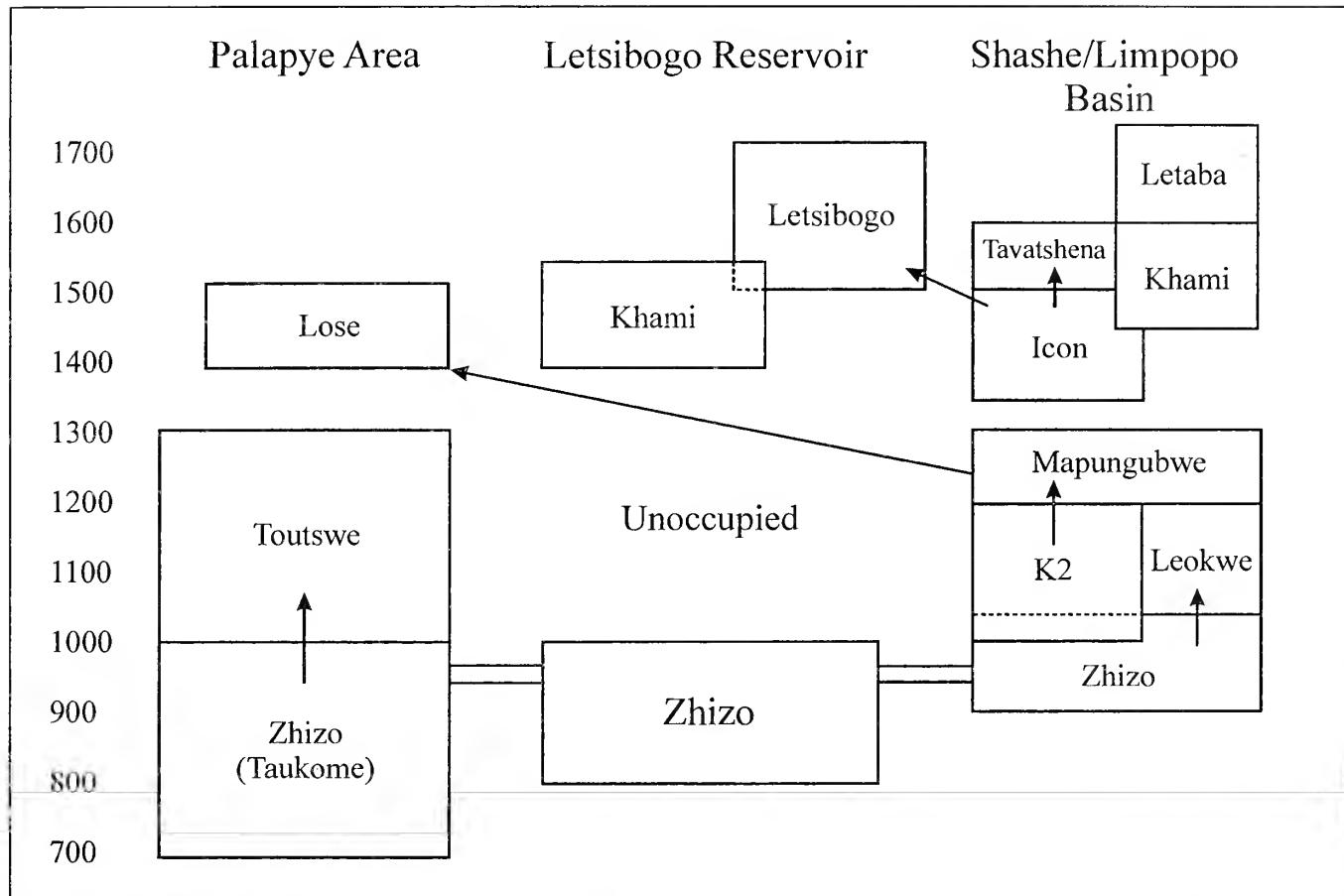


Fig. 60. Culture-history sequence in Letsibogo and neighbouring areas.

Biot, Y. 1993. How long can high stocking densities be sustained? In: Behnke, R.H., Scoones, I. & Kerven, C. (eds) Range ecology at disequilibrium: new models of natural variability and pastoral adaptation in African savanna:153-172. London: Overseas Development Institute.

Brain, C.K. 1974. Some suggested procedures in the analysis of bone accumulations from southern African Quaternary sites. Annals of the Transvaal Museum 29(1):1-8.

Brochier, J.E., Villa, P. & Giacomarra, M. 1992. Shepherds and sediments: geo-ethnoarchaeology of pastoral sites. Journal of Anthropological Archaeology 11:47-102.

Calabrese, J. 2000. Interregional interaction in southern Africa: Zhizo and Leopard's Kopje relations in northern South Africa, southwestern Zimbabwe, and eastern Botswana, AD 1000 to 1200. African Archaeological Review 17:183-210.

Campbell, A.C. 1988. Archaeological review (Initial Survey), Letsibogo Reservoir Area. Report prepared for Sir M. MacDonald and Partners.

Campbell, A.C. 1990. The nature of Botswana: a guide to conservation and development. Gland: IUCN.

Campbell, A.C. 1991. Distribution of prehistoric Kalanga villages in the lower Shashe and Letsibogo areas. In: C. van Waarden (ed.) Kalanga retrospect and prospect: 19-33. Gaborone: Botswana Society

Campbell, A.C., Kinahan, J. & Van Waarden, C. 1995. Letsibogo Dam and Reservoir. Mitigation of archaeological sites. Phase II. Report prepared for Cave Klapwijk and Associates.

Campbell, A.C., Kinahan, J. & Van Waarden, C. 1996. Archaeological sites at Letsibogo Dam. Botswana Notes and Records 28:47-53.

Canti, M.G. 1997. An investigation of microscopic calcareous spherulites from herbivore dungs. Journal of Archaeological Science 24:219-231.

Coates-Palgrave, K. 1981. Trees of southern Africa. Cape Town: C. Struik.

Denbow, J.R. 1979. *Cenchrus ciliaris*: an ecological indicator of Iron Age middens using aerial photography in eastern Botswana. South African Journal of Science 75(9):405-408.

Denbow, J.R. 1982. The Toutswe tradition: a study in socio-economic change. In: Hitchcock, R.R. & Smith, M.R. (eds) Settlement in Botswana: 73-86. Johannesburg: Heinemann and the Botswana Society.

Denbow, J.R. 1983. Iron Age economics: herding, wealth and politics along the fringes of the Kalahari Desert during the Early Iron Age. PhD thesis, University of Indiana, Bloomington.

Denbow, J. 1986. A new look at the later prehistory of the Kalahari. Journal of African History 27:3-28.

Doggett, H. 1976. Sorghum. In: N.W. Simmonds (ed.)

Evolution of crop plants: 112-117. London: Longmans.

Evers, T.M. 1981. The Iron Age in the eastern Transvaal. In: E.A. Voigt (ed.) *Guide to archaeological sites in the northern and eastern Transvaal*: 65-198. Pretoria: Transvaal Museum.

Evers, T.M. 1988. The recognition of groups in the Iron Age of southern Africa. PhD thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Evers, T.M. & Van der Merwe, N.J. 1987. Iron Age ceramics from Phalaborwa, north-eastern Transvaal lowveld, South Africa. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* 42:87-106.

FAO, 1978. Report on the Agro-ecological Zones Project, Vol. 1: methodology and results for Africa. (World Soil Resources Reports No. 48). Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Folk, R.L. & Ward, W.C. 1957. A study in the significance of grainsize parameters. *Journal of Sedimentary Petrology* 27:3-26.

Friedman, G.M. 1961. Distinction between dune, beach and river sands from their textural characteristics. *Journal of Sedimentary Petrology* 31:514-529.

Garlake, P.S. 1967. Iron Age archaeology. In: 17<sup>th</sup> Expedition: Maramani: 22-25. Bulawayo: Rhodesian Schools Exploration Society.

Hanisch, E.O.M. 1979. Excavations at Icon, northern Transvaal. In: Van der Merwe, N.J. & Huffman, T.N. (eds) *Iron Age studies in southern Africa* (Goodwin Series No. 3): 72-79. Claremont: South African Archaeological Society.

Hanisch, E.O.M. 1980. An archaeological interpretation of certain Iron Age sites in the Limpopo/Shashe Valley. MA thesis, University of Pretoria.

Hanisch, E., Van Waarden, C. & Campbell, A.C. 1993. Archaeological impact assessment. In: Cave Klapwijk and Associates (eds.) *An environmental impact, compensation and relocation assessment and other associated work for a dam on the Motloutse River at Letsibogo*: 64-101. Report prepared for Department of Water Affairs, Government of Botswana.

Herbert, E. 1984. *Red gold of Africa: copper in precolonial history and culture*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Huffman, T.N. 1974. The Leopards Kopje Tradition Museum Memoir No. 6. Salisbury: National Museums and Monuments of Rhodesia.

Huffman, T.N. 1980. Ceramics, classification and Iron Age entities. *African Studies* 39(2):123-174.

Huffman, T.N. 1982. Archaeology and ethnohistory of the African Iron Age. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 11:133-150.

Huffman, T.N. 1984. Leopard's Kopje and the nature of the Iron Age in Bantu Africa. *Zimbabwea* 1:28-35.

Huffman, T.N. 1986. Archaeological evidence and conventional explanations of Southern Bantu settlement patterns. *Africa* 56:280-298.

Huffman, T.N. 1986. Iron Age settlement patterns and the origins of class distinction in southern Africa. *Advances in World Archaeology* 5:291-338.

Huffman, T.N. 1989. Iron Age migrations: the ceramic sequence in southern Zambia, excavations at Gundu and Ndonde. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Huffman, T.N. 1996a. Archaeological evidence for climatic change during the last 2000 years in southern Africa. *Quaternary International* 33:55-60.

Huffman, T.N. 1996b. Snakes and crocodiles: power and symbolism in ancient Zimbabwe. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Huffman, T.N. & Calabrese, J. 1999. Letsibogo archaeological mitigation Phase III. Report prepared for Environmental Consultants of AquaTech Groundwater Consultants, Botswana. Johannesburg: Archaeological Resources Management.

Huffman, T.N. 2001. The Central Cattle Pattern and interpreting the past. *Southern African Humanities* 13:19-35.

Huffman, T.N. 2002. Regionality in the Iron Age: the case of the Sotho-Tswana. *Southern African Humanities* 14:1-22.

Huffman, T.N., Calabrese, J.A., & Grant, M.R. 1997. *Archaeological Research in Madikwe Game Reserve, North West Province*. Report prepared for North West Parks Board. Johannesburg: Archaeological Resources Management.

Huffman, T.N. & Hanisch, E.O.M. 1987. Settlement hierarchies in the northern Transvaal: Zimbabwe ruins and Venda history. *African Studies* 46:79-116.

Huffman, T.N., Van der Merwe, H.D., Grant, M.R. & Kruger, G.S. 1995. Early copper mining at Thakadu, Botswana. *Journal of the South African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy* 95:53-61.

Huffman, T.N. and J.C. Vogel. 1991. The chronology of Great Zimbabwe. *South African Archaeology Bulletin* 46:61-70.

Key, R.M. 1976. The geology of the area around Francistown and Phikwe, Northeast and Central Districts, Botswana. (District Memoir 3). Geological Survey of Botswana.

Kinahan, J. 1986. Settlement patterns and regional exchange exchange: evidence from recent Iron Age sites on the Kavango River, northeastern Namibia. *Cimbebasia* (B) 3: 109-116.

Kinahan, J., Kinahan, J.H.A. & Van Waarden, C. 1998. The archaeology and symbolic dimensions of a thirteenth century village in eastern Botswana. *Southern African Field Archaeology* 7(2):63-71.

Kinahan, J. 1999. One thousand years of agropastoral settlement on the Motloutse River. Report prepared for Environmental Consultants of AquaTech Groundwater Consultants, Botswana. Windhoek: Quaternary Research Services.

Kinahan, J. 2000. Fifteenth century agropastoral responses to a disequilibrium ecosystem in eastern Botswana. In Barker, G. and Gilbertson, D. eds *Living on the margins: the archaeology of drylands*. London: Routledge, pp 233-251.

Kiyaga-Mulindwa, D. 1990. Excavation at Lose Enclosure, Central Botswana. In: Sinclair, P. & Pwiti, G. (eds) *Urban origins in Eastern Africa: proceedings of the 1990 Workshop*: 48-59 (Project Working Paper No. 6). Stockholm: The Central Board of National Antiquities.

Kiyaga-Mulindwa, D. 1992. Iron-working at Makodu in eastern Botswana. In: *Urban origins in Eastern Africa: proceedings of the 1991 Workshop in Zanzibar*. (Project Working Paper No. 8). Stockholm: The Central Board of National Antiquities.

Klein, R.G. & Cruz-Uribe, K. 1984. The analysis of animal bones from archaeological sites. (Prehistoric Archaeology and Ecology Series). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kuper, A. 1982. *Wives for cattle: bridewealth and marriage in southern Africa*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Lamarche, V.C. 1968. Rates of slope degradation as determined from botanical evidence, White Mountains, California. United States Geological Survey Professional Paper 352-I.

Larsson, A. & Larsson V. 1984. Traditional Tswana housing: a study in four villages in eastern Botswana. Stockholm: Swedish Council for Building Research.

Leach, M. & Mearns, R. (eds.). 1996. *The lie of the land: challenging received wisdom on the African environment*. London: The International African Institute.

Lilly, M.A. 1977. An assessment of the dendrochronological potential of indigenous tree species in South Africa. (Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, Occasional Paper No. 18). Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand.

Loubser, J.H.N. 1992. The ethnoarchaeology of Venda-speakers in southern Africa. (*Navorsinge van die Nasionale Museum Bloemfontein*, vol. 7, part 8). Bloemfontein: National Museum.

Molyneaux, T. & Reinecke, T. 1983. Ancient ruins and mines of the Tati region of north-east Botswana. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* 38:9.

Musonda, F. 1987. Surface textures of sand grains from the Victoria Falls region, Zambia: implications for depositional environments and local archaeological occurrences. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* 42:161-164.

Parsons, K. 1982. *A new history of southern Africa*. Gaborone: Macmillan.

Piperno, D.R. 1988. *Phytolith analysis: an archaeological and geological perspective*. San Diego: Academic Press.

Purseglove, J.W. 1976. Millets. In: N.W. Simmonds (ed.) *Evolution of crop plants*: 91-93. London: Longmans.

Reid, D.A.M. 1996. Archaeological mitigation on the North-South Carrier Project. Report prepared for the Department of Water Affairs. Gaborone: University of Botswana.

Robinson, K.R. 1959. *Khami Ruins*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Robinson, K.R. 1960. Archaeological report. *Sentinel Expedition*: 22-29. Bulawayo: Rhodesian Schools Exploration Society.

Robinson, K.R. 1961. *Zimbabwe pottery*. Occasional Papers of the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia 3(23a):193-226.

Robinson, K.R. 1966. The Leopard's Kopje culture, its position in the Iron Age of Southern Rhodesia. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* 21:5-51.

Schnabel, S. 1994. Using botanical evidence for the determination of erosion rates in semi-arid tropical areas. In: Bryan, R.B. (ed.) *Soil erosion, land degradation and social transition-geoecological analysis of a semi-arid tropical region, Kenya*. (*Advances in Geoecology* 27):31-46.

Selley, R.C. 1976. *An introduction to sedimentology*. London: Academic Press.

Smithers, R.N. 1986. *Land mammals of southern Africa: a field guide*. Johannesburg: Macmillan.

Stocking, M. 1984. Rates of erosion and sediment yield in the African environment. *IAHS Publication* 144: 285-294.

Strömquist, L., Yanda, P., Msemwa, P., Lindberg, C. & Simonsson-Forsberg, L. 1999. Utilizing landscape information to analyse and predict environmental change: the extended baseline perspective. *Ambio* 28 (5): 436-443.

Summers, R. 1969. *Ancient mining in Rhodesia and adjacent areas*. Salisbury: Trustees of the National Museums of Rhodesia.

Thomas, D.S.G & Shaw, P.A. 1991. *The Kalahari environment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tlou, T & Campbell, A.C. 1997. *History of Botswana*. Gaborone: Macmillan.

Tyson, P. & Lindsay, J. 1992. The climate of the last 2000 years in southern Africa. *The Holocene* 2:271-278.

Van Waarden, C. 1988. Oral tradition of the Bakalanga of Botswana. (*Occasional Paper 2*). Gaborone: Botswana Society.

Van Waarden, C. 1989. The granaries of Vumba: structural interpretation of a Khami period commoner site. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 8:131-157.

Van Waarden, C. 1991. The Kalanga state Butua. In: C. van Waarden (ed.) *Kalanga retrospect and prospect*: 9-18. Gaborone: Botswana Society.

Vogel, J.C., Talma, A.S., Fuls, A., Fisser, E. & Becker, B. 1993. Pretoria calibration curve for short-lived samples, AD 1930-3530 BC. *Radiocarbon* 35(1): 73-86.

Voigt, E.A. 1983. *Mapungubwe: an archaeozoological interpretation of an Iron Age community*. Pretoria: Transvaal Museum.

Walker, R. 1985. *A guide to post-cranial bones of East African animals*. Norwich: Hylochoerus Press.

# SUPERFICIAL COMPARISONS AND REALITY: A REASSESSMENT OF DUNEFIELD MIDDEN AND THE SWARTKOP INDUSTRY

JAYSON ORTON

Department of Archaeology  
University of Cape Town  
Rondebosch, 7700

email: [jayson@age.uct.ac.za](mailto:jayson@age.uct.ac.za)

## ABSTRACT

The flaked lithic assemblages from two late precolonial sites, Swartkop 1 and Dunefield Midden, are presented and compared showing points of similarity and difference. Specifically, Dunefield Midden is shown, on technological grounds, not to represent an example of the Swartkop Industry. The paper corrects statements made by myself in an earlier publication, and serves as a warning to others regarding the comparison of apparently similar assemblages without a deeper analysis of their true character. An appeal to authors to be careful with regard to their choice of terminology when presenting general summaries of research is also made.

## INTRODUCTION

In a recent article (Orton 2002) I likened the lithics from the more recent occupation of Dunefield Midden (DFM), located at Elands Bay on the west coast of the Western Cape (see Orton 2002), to the Swartkop Industry of the Northern Cape interior (Fig. 1). An analogue for the extremely unique DFM lithics was being sought, and based on the limited information available (Beaumont *et al.* 1985, 1995; Beaumont & Vogel 1989; Morris 1990), a comparison with the Swartkop seemed significant. Unfortunately, very few details pertaining to the Swartkop lithics are provided in the literature, and as a result, hindsight showed these to be quite inadequate. In addition, some of the terminology used was misleading, and, as it turned out, not always technically correct. However, with the recent standardisation of terminology, it is now possible to correct these problems.

Subsequent to the publication of the article, and owing to the requirements of further research into the DFM lithics, I travelled to Kimberley and undertook an analysis of the Swartkop 1 assemblage (Fig. 1), which is regarded as the typesite of the Swartkop Industry (Morris & Beaumont 1991, Table 5). Upon opening the box of lithics, one could tell that the two assemblages were technologically quite different, an interpretation that was supported by the analysis.

## BACKGROUND

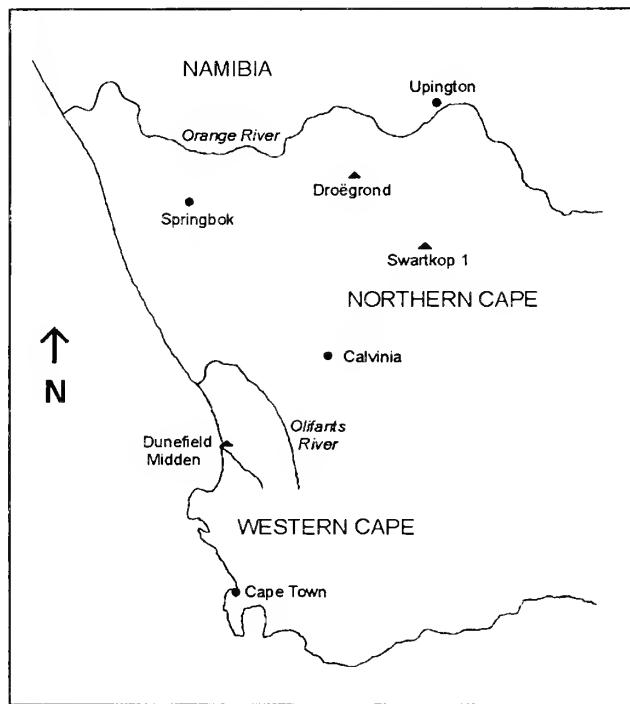
The initial comparison was stimulated by the seemingly very high frequencies of backed artefacts commonly found in recent Northern Cape assemblages (e.g. Smith 1995;

Webley 1992). Such artefacts are seldom seen in comparably aged assemblages from the Western Cape. The similarities between DFM and the Swartkop included the overwhelming dominance of backed elements among the formal tools, the presence of pottery and the similarly recent dates. Furthermore, I had misunderstood an unclear reference to raw materials (Morris 1990:39) that has since been clarified by the author. Swartkop sites are usually dominated by hornfels (Beaumont, pers. comm.) with quartz also occurring frequently. However, the proportions are variable, presumably relative to what is locally available near each site (Morris, pers. comm.).

An ostrich carbonate date of  $670 \pm 50$  BP (Pta-4106) is available from the two spits excavated at Swartkop 1 (Beaumont *et al.* 1995). After applying a correction of approximately 180 years (Vogel *et al.* 2001) the date represents a possible age of c.  $490 \pm 50$  BP. DFM has 28 radiocarbon determinations on *in situ* charcoal and marine shell, all from the single occupation layer. After the appropriate marine corrections, they average about 650 years old with 24 of them falling between 600 and 700 BP (Orton, in prep.). This dates both assemblages similarly, placing them in the late pre-colonial period.

## TERMINOLOGY

Earlier published accounts upon which I had previously relied had used the unqualified generic term "blade" for both blades and bladelets, thus leading to a further source of confusion. The two terms inherently refer to different sized artefacts and it is important that the distinction be made clear. Although earlier defined slightly differently



**Figure 1** Map of the north-western and western parts of South Africa showing the locations of the sites mentioned in the text.

(Deacon 1984), current standard usage (e.g. Mitchell 2002) suggests that blades and bladelets should have a length:breadth ratio  $\geq 2$ , with the former having a length  $> 25$  mm and the latter 25 mm or less. These definitions are employed here.

Another terminological issue relates to the use of the word 'industry'. The issue arose out of Smith's (1995:300) suggestion that Droëgrond epitomised the Swartkop Industry. However, he is referring to the fact that it contains many retouched tools rather than to the technology employed, the idea being to distinguish between a set of probable 'hunter' sites at which many tools were made (Swartkop Industry) and another set of probable 'herder' sites with few tools (Doornfontein Industry) (Smith, pers. comm.). Perhaps 'economy', 'socio-economy' or even 'lifeway' as applied by Parsons (2003), should be used in this sense with 'industry' being retained for references to lithic technology only? The tools at Droëgrond are very small with quartz being the primary raw material (Smith 1995) suggesting again that the technology employed is quite different from that at Swartkop 1. Further discussion on his point follows below. In addition, I would like to suggest that a concerted effort be made among Later Stone Age researchers to qualify synoptic terminology used in publication (and elsewhere) such that a clear picture might always be presented to the reader. Most archaeological terms have inherent meaning and when used in incorrect contexts, preconceived ideas are frequently engendered with the result that the intended interpretation can be unintentionally altered. While it is acceptable to use generic terms, consideration should be given to the context so as to avoid confusion.

**Table 1. Frequency of lithic artefacts by category (%).**

	Swartkop 1	DFM
Debitage & cores	93.15	97.13
Edge-damaged	3.96	0.56
Formal tools	2.89	2.31
Total	100.00	100.00

**Table 2. Frequency of formal tools by category (%).**

	Swartkop 1	DFM
Backed	84.93	84.33
Scraper	1.37	6.67
MRP	13.70	8.67
Other	0	0.33
Total	100.00	100.00

## ASSEMBLAGE COMPARISON

Following my re-analysis of the Swartkop 1 assemblage, presentation of selected data would still indicate broad similarities with DFM (Tables 1 and 2). However, when the categories in Table 1 are divided into their constituent classes the picture changes significantly (Table 3) with two seemingly very different industries having produced each assemblage. The core and debitage frequencies in particular are indicative of a very different mode of production. At Swartkop single platform cores were used to produce high frequencies of relatively large blades and bladelets while at DFM bipolar flaking resulted in many more flakes than bladelets. The latter assemblage also strongly reflects the large quantities of chips that the bipolar technique typically produces. Clearly, the single platform cores at Swartkop were very much more productive than the DFM bipolars, hence the smaller frequency of cores at that site – a situation certainly resulting directly from the size and nature of the available raw materials in each case. Although unquantified at DFM, the edge-damaged class there consists mostly of relatively small flakes, while at Swartkop only 54% are flakes with 43% being blades and 3% bladelets.

The raw materials are also very different (Table 4) and one might argue, quite correctly, that the particular materials used at each site enforced certain constraints on artefact manufacture. However, with Orton (in prep.) demonstrating that other materials were certainly available within reasonable proximity of DFM, there must certainly have been a conscious selection of quartz as the primary raw material there. Judging by the raw material frequencies at Droëgrond (Smith 1995), the same is likely to be true there. Conversely, at Swartkop 1, quartz appears to have been deliberately avoided. All formal tools and edge-damaged pieces are made in the dominant material in each case. It should be noted that, although untested geologically, are the pieces made in the dominant material in each case. It should be noted that, although untested geologically, the CCS in the case of Swartkop 1 is chert rather than the typical chalcedonic nodules which frequently occur in many sites. The retouched artefacts at the two sites differ

**Table 3. Frequency of lithic artefacts by class (%; n given in parentheses for formal tools).**

	Swartkop 1	DFM
Bipolar cores	0	3.55
Single platform cores	0.75	0.07
Irregular cores	0.04	0.09
Chips	8.86	65.59
Chunks	6.05	14.97
Flakes	61.30	12.09
Blades	9.06	0.03
Bladelets	7.08	0.75
Backed blades	0.28 (7)	0
Backed bladelets	1.94 (49)	1.47 (162)
Backed flakes	0.12 (3)	0.33 (44)
Miscellaneous backed	0.12 (3)	0.11 (14)
Adiagnostic backed	0	0.05 (7)
Endscrapers	0.04 (1)	0.01 (1)
Sidescrapers	0	0.04 (5)
Misc. backed scraper	0	0.02 (2)
Miscellaneous scraper	0	0.06 (8)
Adiagnostic scraper	0	0.03 (4)
Chopper	0	0.01 (1)
Misc. retouched piece	0.40 (10)	0.20 (26)
Edge-damaged	3.96	0.56
Total	100.00 %	100.03 %

significantly. Swartkop 1 contains just a single, fairly large scraper, while DFM shows an assortment of different types with all being very small. Differences in the backed artefacts are considered in greater detail in a separate section below.

A distinct point of similarity that is shown by Tables 3 and 4 relates to the incredibly expedient nature of both assemblages. The extreme focus on a single raw material and a single reduction technique in each case and the desire to produce large numbers of backed blades and bladelets suggest that a particular function was intended for the tools produced at each site. This does not imply that similar activities were carried out at each site, although microwear studies might help to interpret artefact functions.

### THE BACKED BLADES AND BLADELETS

Despite the focus on backing, a closer look at the backed blades and bladelets specifically, presents further distinctions. The backed bladelets at DFM are all small with none reaching blade proportions while those from Swartkop 1 are generally much larger and slimmer (Table 5). This seems to have been intentional on the part of the Swartkop tool makers since with the smallest unbroken backed bladelet being just 14mm by 3mm in dimension, they certainly had the ability (and the raw material) to manufacture such tiny pieces as are found in the DFM assemblage. The 43:3 ratio of blades to bladelets among the Swartkop 1 edge-damaged artefacts as mentioned above further supports the notion that larger pieces were desired.

Parsons (2003) uses a microlithic index (MI) to gauge artefact size: microlithic artefacts have an area < 200 mm<sup>2</sup>

**Table 4. Raw material frequencies (%).**

	Swartkop 1	DFM
Quartz	0.16	97.86
Chert	99.17	0
Quartzite & Sandstone	0.12	1.93
Other	0.55	0.22
Total	100.00	100.01

**Table 5. Size of backed blades and bladelets (mm).**

	Swartkop 1 *	DFM **
Total unbroken backed blades and bladelets	10	29
Mean breadth	6.70	5.98
Minimum (breadth)	3	4.4
Maximum (breadth)	12	8.5
Mean length	24.60	15.28
Minimum (length)	14	10.1
Maximum (length)	35	20.6
Mean Length:breadth ratio	4.28	2.73
Minimum (L:B ratio)	2	1.41
Maximum (L:B ratio)	8	3.5

\* Measured to the nearest mm

\*\* Ref.: Orton 1998, measured to the nearest 0.1mm

**Table 6. Area statistics for unbroken backed blades and bladelets.**

	Swartkop1	DFM
Minimum area (mm <sup>2</sup> )	42	54.39
Maximum area (mm <sup>2</sup> )	420	170.00
Mean area (mm <sup>2</sup> )	175.60	93.35
MI (%)	70.00	100.00

while macrolithic artefacts are > 200 mm<sup>2</sup> with the percentage of microlithic artefacts being the MI. Note that this value represents the product of the maximum length and breadth and as such is not strictly the true artefact area. The imprecision of my measurements (to the nearest mm) resulted in one example of exactly 200 mm<sup>2</sup> and it was unclear from Parsons (2003) whether this piece should be micro- or macrolithic. I have here assumed it to be the former. In the current study only formal tools were measured and some area data for all unbroken examples are given in Table 6. Following Parsons (2003), these data are presented graphically in Figure 2. Both assemblages exhibit a high degree of breakage among the backed tools but considering the significantly higher ratio of unretouched blades to bladelets at Swartkop 1 (1.27) when compared with DFM (0.04), it seems certain that the Swartkop data in Figure 2 should be even more negatively skewed than they already are. Overall, the data suggest that the Swartkop backed blades and bladelets are far more variable, and generally much larger than the backed bladelets from DFM.

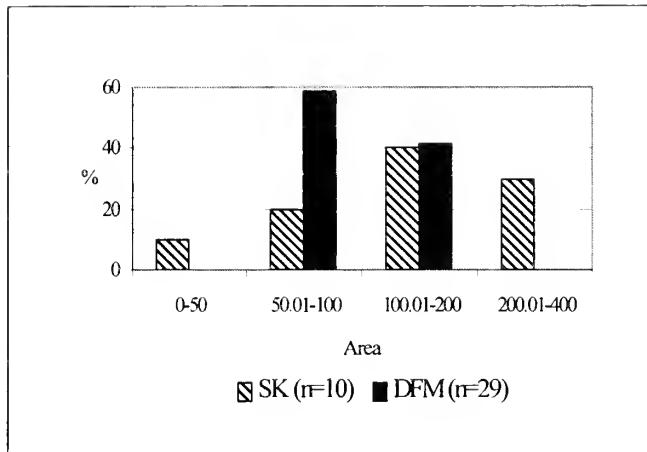


Figure 2 Area of backed blades and bladelets in mm<sup>2</sup>.

## CONCLUSIONS

The lithic assemblages from Dunefield Midden and Swartkop 1 are compared. It is quite clear that the former assemblage does not represent a manifestation of the Swartkop Industry, of which the latter site is said to be the type site. The comparison has shown that accurate characterisation of a lithic assemblage from limited numeric data and general descriptions alone can be very difficult and unreliable in the absence of visual aids, either in the form of scale drawings or a physical examination of the material in question. It should be stressed that summary descriptions can reflect a very different picture to the detailed class by class breakdown employed here, and in addition, the use of non-specific, unqualified generic terminology in such descriptions can be misleading. Researchers should, therefore, be wary of drawing conclusions from such data without first clarifying what is being presented.

So what then, technologically, does DFM represent? It seems likely, if not certain, that a specific activity requiring backed bladelets was planned for the time during which DFM was occupied. Backed bladelets seem most likely to have been used in composite cutting tools (Barham 1992), and with at least three to six eland being present at DFM (Nilssen 1989), it is possible that we are looking at a kill and/or butchery site. Two lithic assemblages very similar to that from DFM have recently been excavated on the Northern Cape coast (Halkett 2003) and it is hoped that forthcoming research into these new finds will help to shed some light on this mystery.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Royden Yates initially drew my attention to the existence of the Swartkop Industry. David Morris very kindly provided access to the Swartkop 1 material and workspace at the McGregor Museum, Kimberley. He also tracked down and provided one of the references. John Parkington and David Morris examined an earlier draft of the manuscript, and very useful comments leading to meaningful revision of the paper were provided by a referee.

## REFERENCES:

Barham, L.S. 1992. Let's walk before we run: an appraisal of historical materialist approaches to the Later Stone Age. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* 47:44-51.

Beaumont, P.B., Morris, D. & Vogel, J.C. 1985. The chronology and context of petroglyphs in South Africa. Paper presented at the South African Association of Archaeologists Conference, Grahamstown.

Beaumont, P.B., Smith, A.B. & Vogel, J.C. 1995. Before the Einiqua: the archaeology of the frontier zone. In: Smith, A.B. (ed.) *Einiqualand: studies of the Orange River frontier*: 236-264. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Deacon, J. 1984. The Later Stone Age of Southernmost Africa. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports International Series 213.

Halkett, D. 2003. A report on the archaeological mitigation program at De Beers Namaqualand Mines March 2002 to June 2003. Archaeology Contracts Office, University of Cape Town.

Mitchell, P. 2002. The archaeology of Southern Africa. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Morris, D. 1990. "Etchings" and "intaglios" in the Upper Karoo. In: Beaumont, P. & Morris, D. (eds) *Guide to archaeological sites in the Northern Cape*: 232-258. Kimberley: Mc-Gregor Museum.

Morris, D. & Beaumont, P. 1991. !Nawabdanas: archaeological sites at Renosterkop, Kakamas District, Northern Cape.

Nilssen, P-J. 1989. Refitting pottery and eland body parts as a way of reconstructing hunter-gatherer behaviour: an example from the Later Stone Age at Verlorenvlei. Unpublished Honours project: University of Cape Town.

Orton, J.D.J. 1998. Patterns in Stone: Understanding the Lithic Assemblage of a Western Cape Later Stone Age Campsite. Unpublished Honours Project: University of Cape Town.

Orton, J. 2002. Patterns in stone: the lithic assemblage from Dunefield Midden, Western Cape, South Africa. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* 57: 31-37.

Orton, J.D.J. (In prep.). The Quartz Conundrum. Masters Dissertation, University of Cape Town.

Parsons, I. 2003. Lithic expressions of Later Stone Age lifeways in the Northern Cape. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* 58: 33-37.

Smith, A.B. 1995. Archaeological observations along the Orange river and its hinterland. In: Smith, A.B. (ed.) *Einiqualand: studies of the Orange River frontier*: 265-300. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Vogel, J.C., Visser, E. & Fuls, A. 2001. Suitability of ostrich eggshell for radiocarbon dating. *Radio-carbon* 43: 133-137.

Webley, L.E. 1992. The history and archaeology of pastoralist and hunter-gatherer settlement in the north-western Cape, South Africa. Unpublished Ph.D thesis: University of Cape Town.

# STONE AGE LITHICS FROM NDONDONDWANE

THEMBA ZWANE

*Amafa AkwaZulu Natal, P.O. Box 2685,  
Pietermaritzburg, 3200*

## ABSTRACT

Ndondondwane is a well-known Early Iron Age (EIA) site situated near the Thukela River in KwaZulu-Natal. The importance of the site is mainly based on its ceramics and it has been proclaimed a Provincial Heritage site. The discovery of stone tools beneath the EIA occupation layer during the recent excavations has increased the interest as well as the importance of the site. The stone tools, mostly Middle Stone Age, were found from two sterile layers *i.e.* sterile A and B. Although this is not a stratified site its typological resemblance to other MSA sites in South Africa make associations possible.

## INTRODUCTION

The Early Iron Age site of Ndondondwane (28.53S; 31.01E) is situated about 50 m from the banks of the Thukela River (Fig. 1). Ndondondwane is the name of the traditional ford on the Thukela a few hundred metres downstream of the site, where the water flows over a broad, shallow rapid.

Since 1995 excavations have been conducted at the site by H. Greenfield (University of Manitoba, Canada) and L. van Schalwyk (Ethembeni Cultural Heritage Management) (Greenfield *et al.* 2000). During the course of the work at Midden 1 (Fig. 2) it was found that the Iron Age material overlies two layers, named sterile A and B, containing stone artifacts. The tools are not *in situ* but were washed down the slope.

## EXCAVATION

The grid (1m x 1m) at Midden 1 (Fig. 3) covers an area of 39 square meters. The square designations that were used for the recovered EIA material were also used for the stone age material. Since the main objective of the project was to recover EIA material and the MSA material was not *in situ*, excavation of the stone artefacts was done by spade and no distribution patterns were recorded.

The stone artefacts were packed in boxes according to the squares and taken to the University of Fort Hare for analysis. The material has not been radiometrically dated.

## FINDS

### Stone Artefacts

The analysis of this assemblage is based on the classification scheme of A. Thackeray and A. Kelly (1988) as well as other relevant references. The assemblage

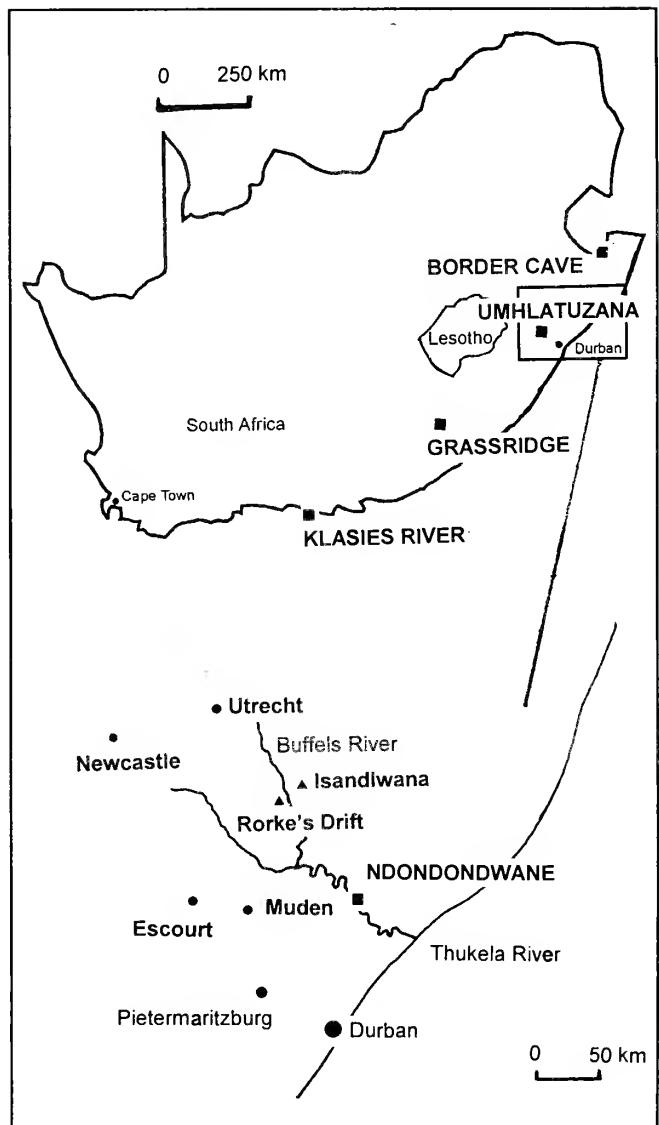


Fig. 1. Location of the sites mentioned in the text (bold letters indicate surface collection areas).

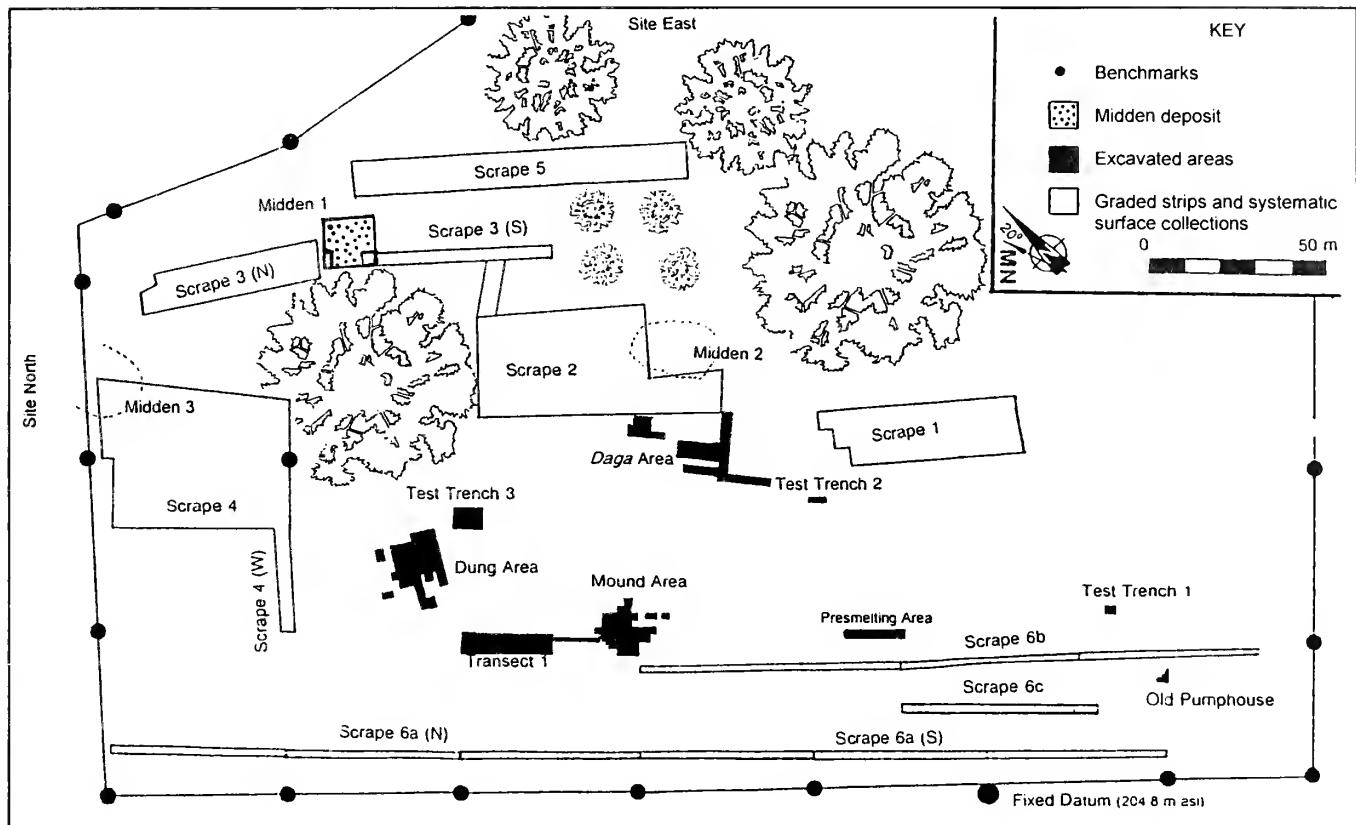


Fig. 2. Site plan and location of the excavations at Ndondondwane, Midden 1 (after Greenfield *et al.* 1997).

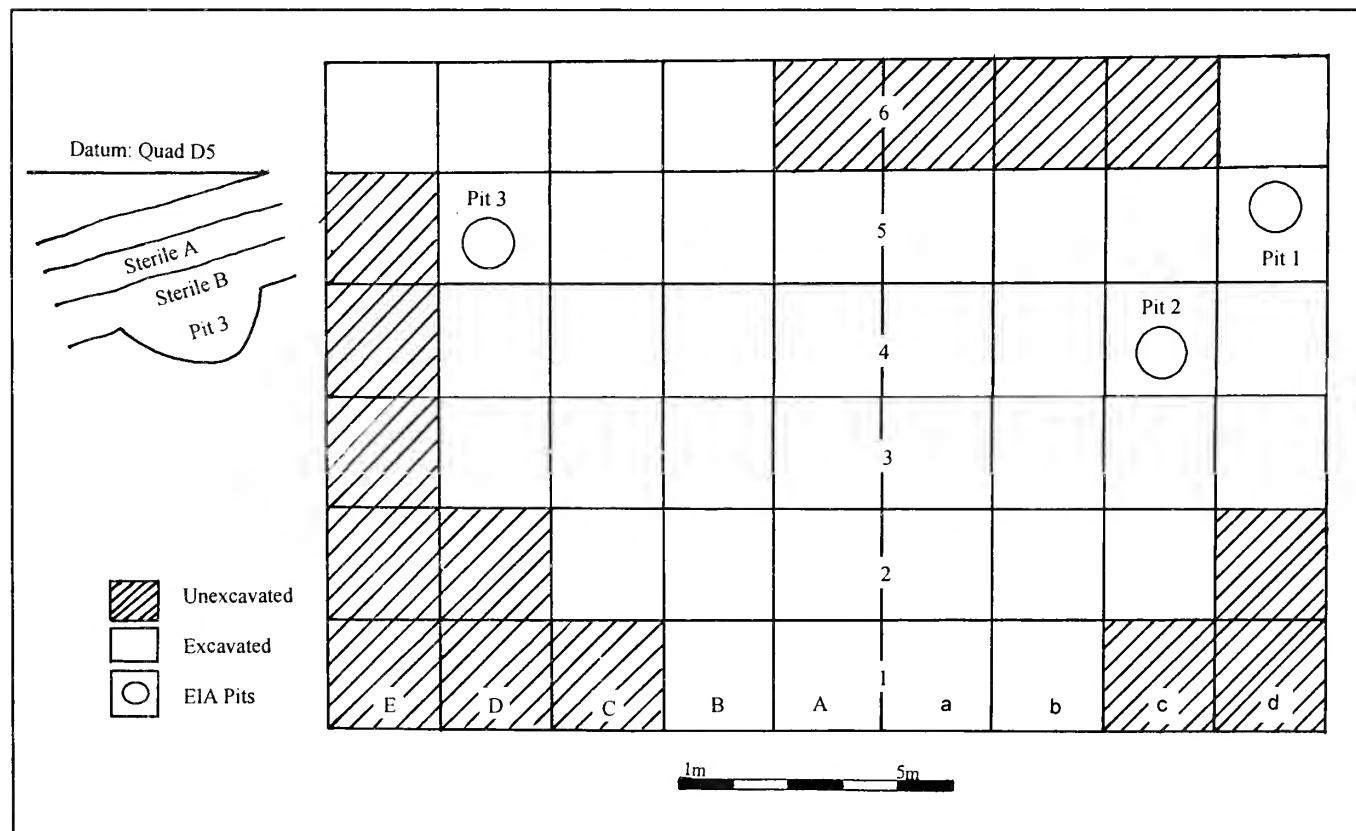


Fig. 3. Grid and the section at Quad D5 to show the position of the sterial layers.

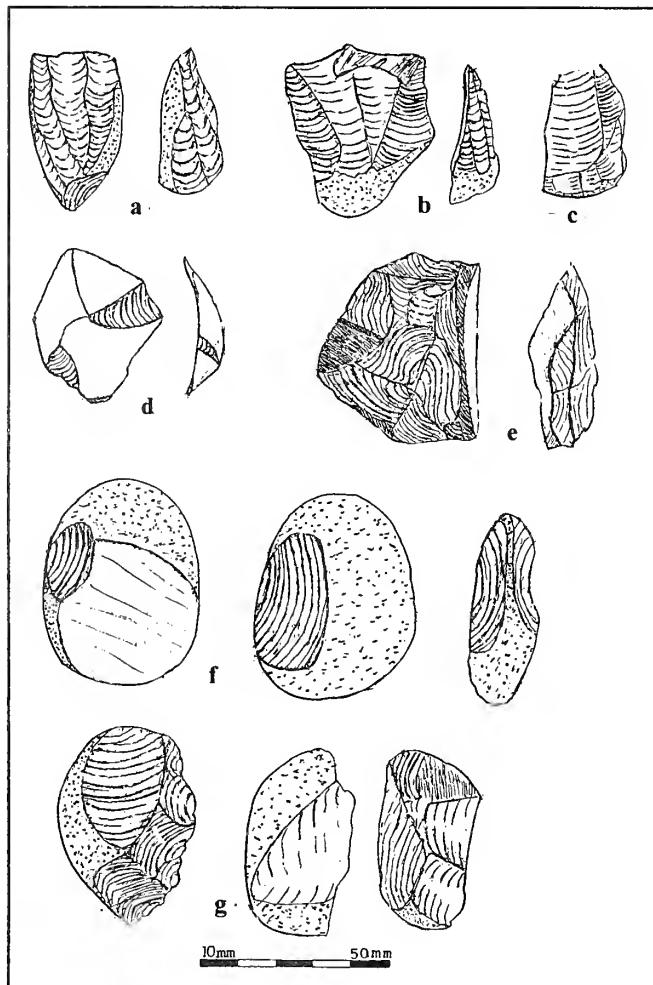


Fig. 4. a - hornfels, D6 sterile B; b - hornfels, B6 sterile A; c - hornfels, A1 sterile A; d - hornfels, A1 sterile A; e - sandstone, A2 sterile A; f - hornfels and g - hornfels, b3 sterile B.

consists of 2089 artefacts, dominated by the waste category (97.43%).

(a). Cores (Fig.4): These are pieces from which at least three flakes have been systematically removed. Cores form 4.4% of the waste category of the Ndondondwane assemblage. The types of cores represented are multi-platform (24%), irregular (19%), single platform (16%), blade cores (33.1%) and opposed platform cores (3.5%). A measured sample of core-rejuvenated flakes shows that the size of cores was 64.8 mm long and 40.9 mm wide.

(b). Chips: These are products of flaking less than or equal to 20 mm in maximum dimension. Quartz is the dominant raw material in the chip category

(c). Chunks: These are the blocky angular pieces more than 20 mm in maximum dimension resulting from the breaking up of raw materials. They lack typical features such as bulb of percussion, dorsal and ventral surfaces and many have parts of the cortex remaining. Chunks form the largest category (44.5%) in the Ndondondwane assemblage.

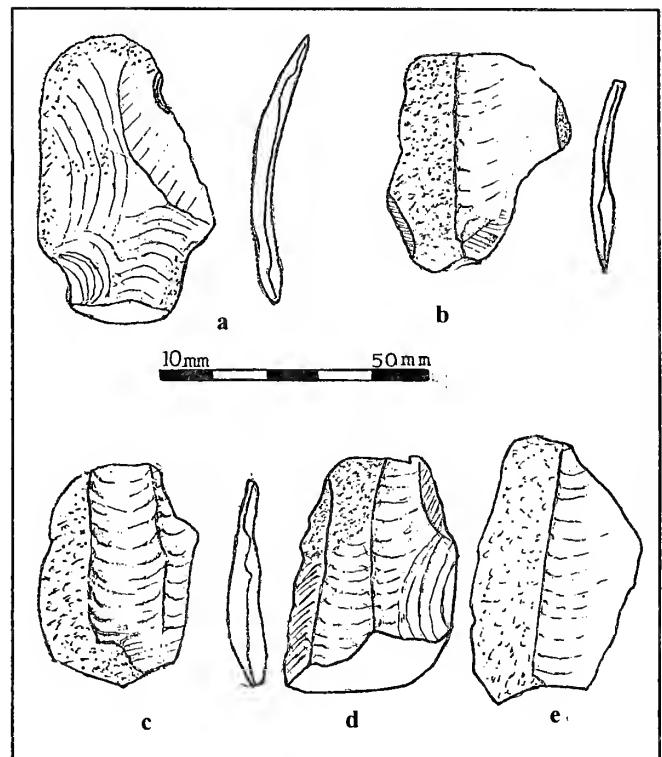


Fig. 5. Ridge preparation: a - hornfels, b4 sterile A, b - sandstone, b3 sterile B; c - quartzite, D1 sterile B; d - quartzite, B4 sterile B and e - quartzite, D6 sterile B.

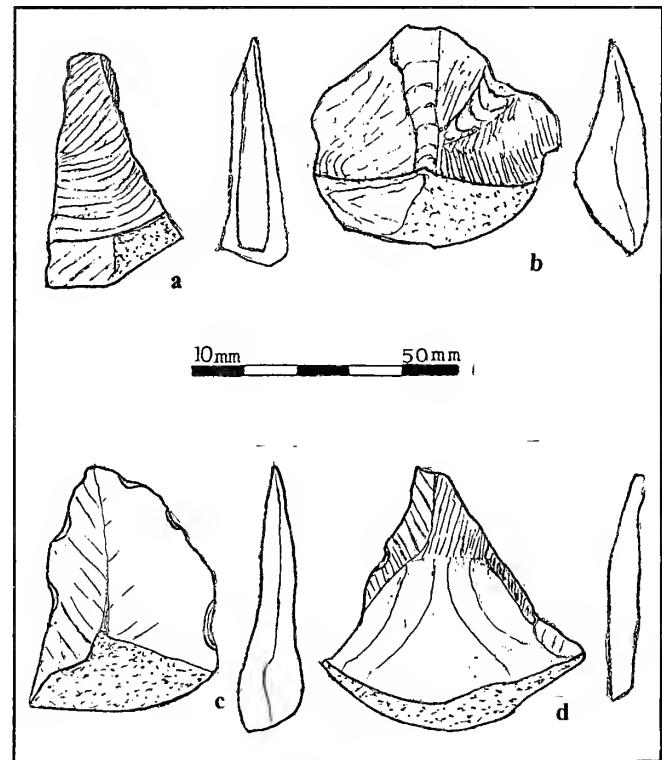


Fig. 6. Platform preparation (crushing): a - quartzite, C6 sterile A; b - c5 sterile B while c and d both quartzite show uncrushed striking platforms from B4 sterile B and D6 sterile B respectively.

(d) Flakes: These artifacts are more than 20mm in maximum dimension and were removed from cores by

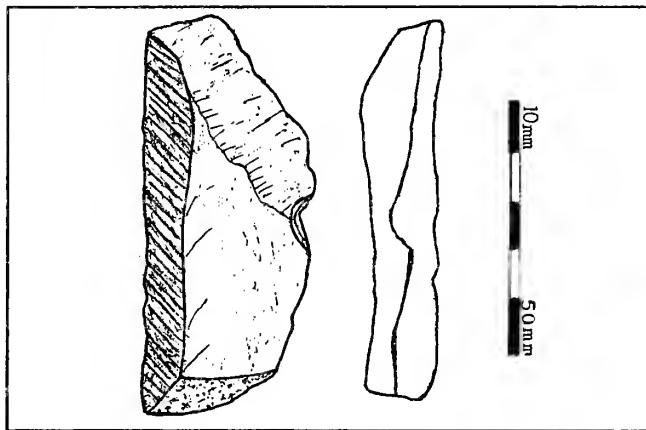


Fig. 7. Core rejuvenated flake from B4 sterile A.

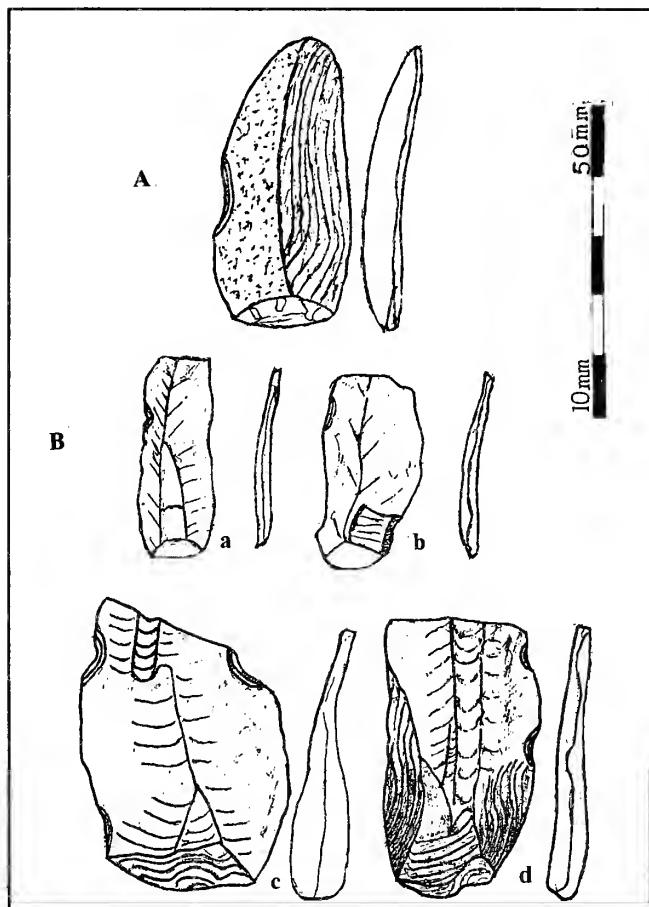


Fig. 8A. Convergent flake blade (ridge preparation) from D6 sterile B.

Fig. 8B. Flake blade sections all hornfels (a - a1 sterile A; b - C6 sterile A; c - b3 sterile B; d - D6 sterile B).

percussion. They have flake features such as a bulb of percussion as well as dorsal and ventral surfaces. Whole and broken irregular flakes (563) comprise 25% of the waste category and are the second largest component of the whole assemblage.

In this category whole cortical flakes make up 28%, non-cortical flakes (27.7%), left cortical flakes (6.7%) and right cortical (7.1%). Ridge and striking platform preparation both involve removal of the cortex

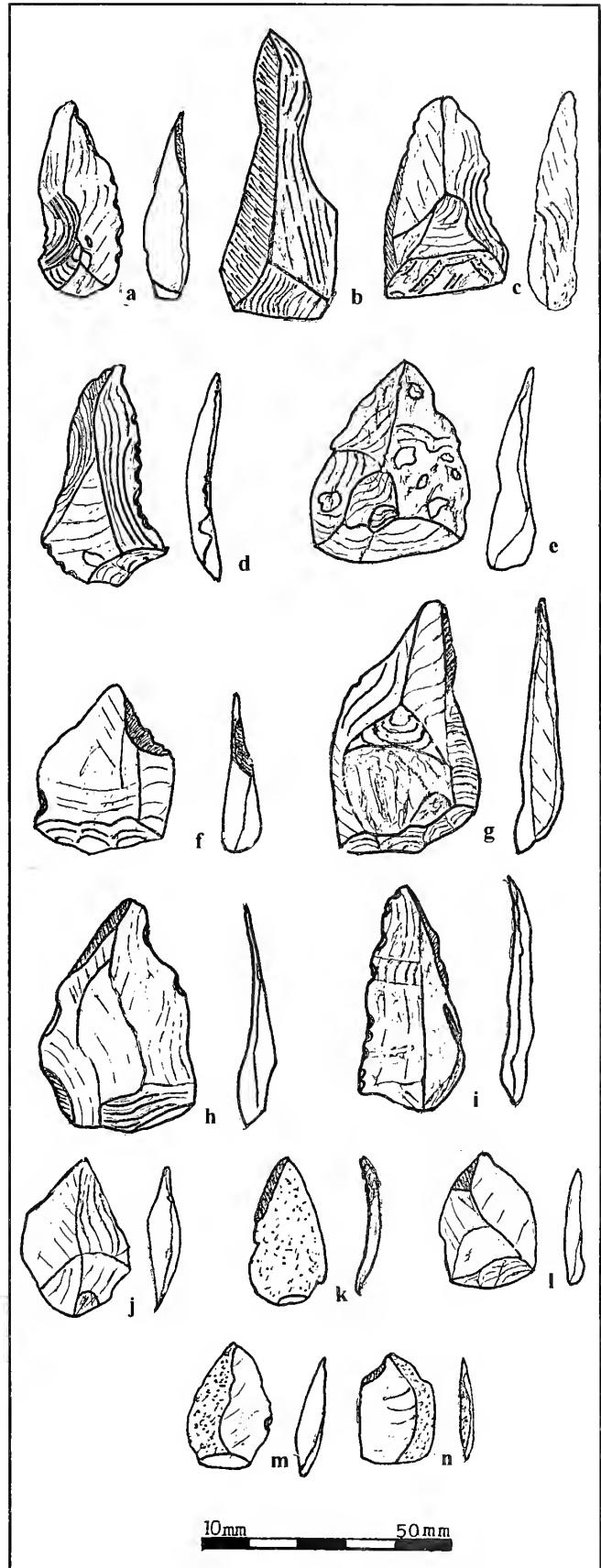
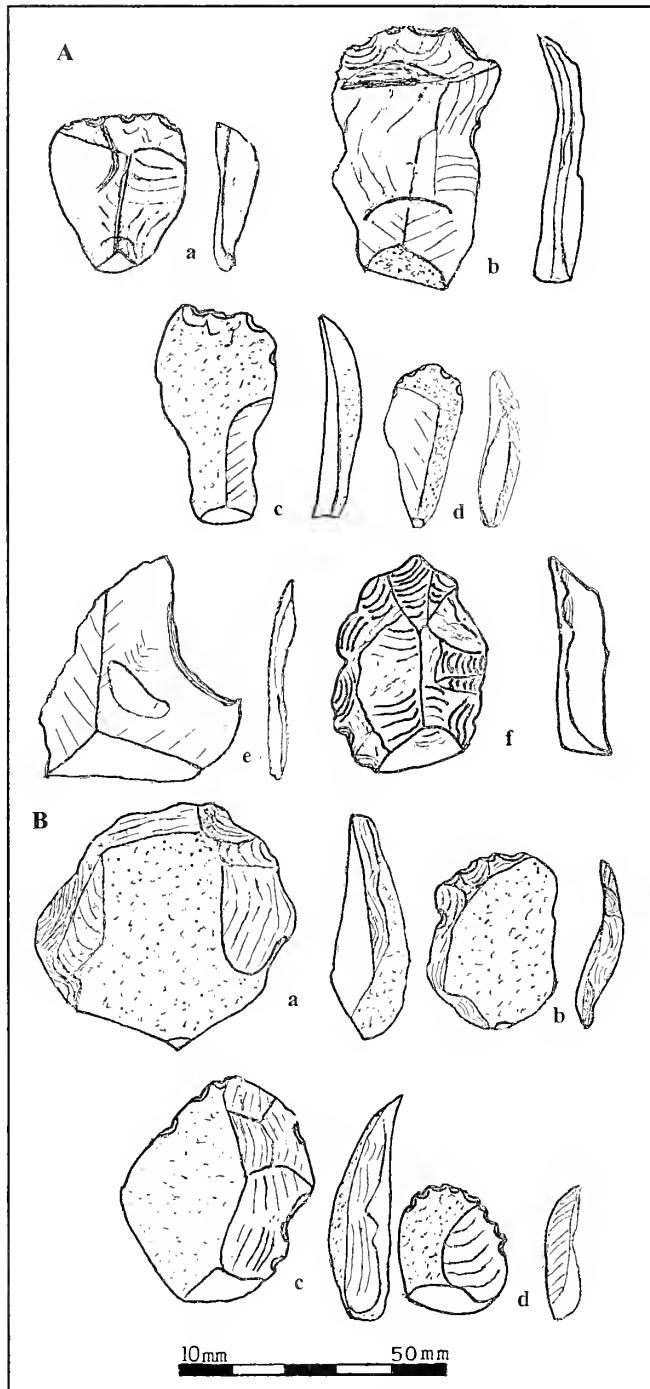


Fig. 9. Triangular flakes: a - hornfels, b3 sterile B; b - hornfels, A1; c - quartz, c3 sterile B; d - hornfels, C6 sterile A; e - sandstone, C6 sterile A; f - hornfels, b3 sterile B; g - hornfels, B4 sterile B; h - hornfels, B5 sterile B; i - hornfels, D6 sterile B; j - hornfels, C6 sterile B; k - hornfels, D6 sterile B; l - hornfels, c3 sterile B; m - hornfels, a2 sterile B; n - hornfels, sterile B.

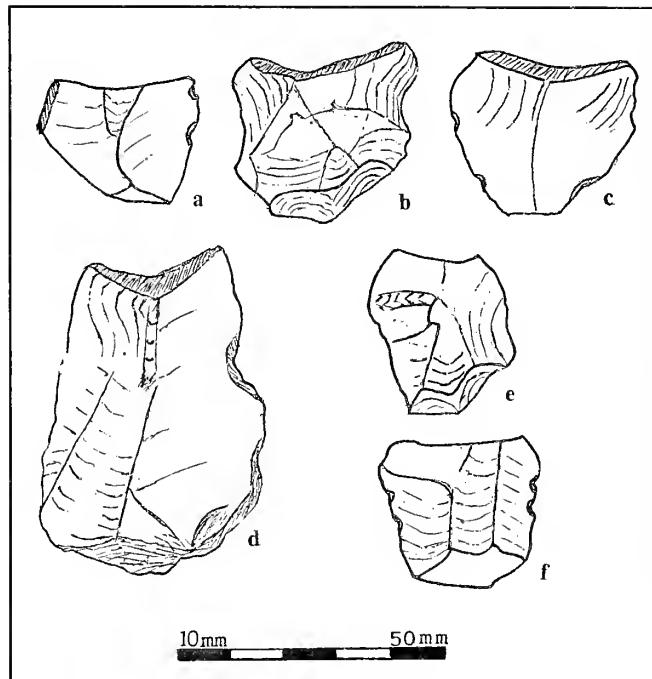


**Fig10A. Scrapers a-d (end scrapers):** a - hornfels, D6 sterile B; b - quartzite, b4, sterile A; c - hornfels, B5 sterile B; d - hornfels, c3 sterile B, e - quartz, hollow scraper, b2 sterile B; f - quartzite, backed scraper, C4 sterile B.

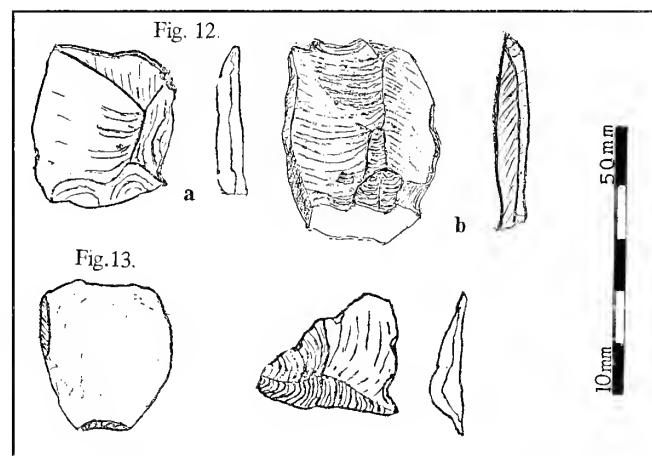
**10B. Core scrapers. All hornfels:** a - c5 sterile B; b - B5 sterile A; c - B5 sterile B; d - c4 sterile B.

form preparation both involve removal of the cortex (crushing) as shown on figures 5 and 6 respectively.

Core rejuvenation flakes (Fig. 7): These are flakes detached in order to renew a core's striking platform. One or both sides of the dorsal surface show evidence of having been part of a core's striking platform (Kuman 1989). At Ndondondwane they make up 0.7% of the waste category.



**Fig. 11. Gouges:** a - hornfels, B6 sterile B; b - Quartzite, A4 sterile B; c - hornfels, b2 sterile A; d - hornfels, B4 sterile B; e - hornfels, A4 sterile B; f - hornfels, b2 sterile B.

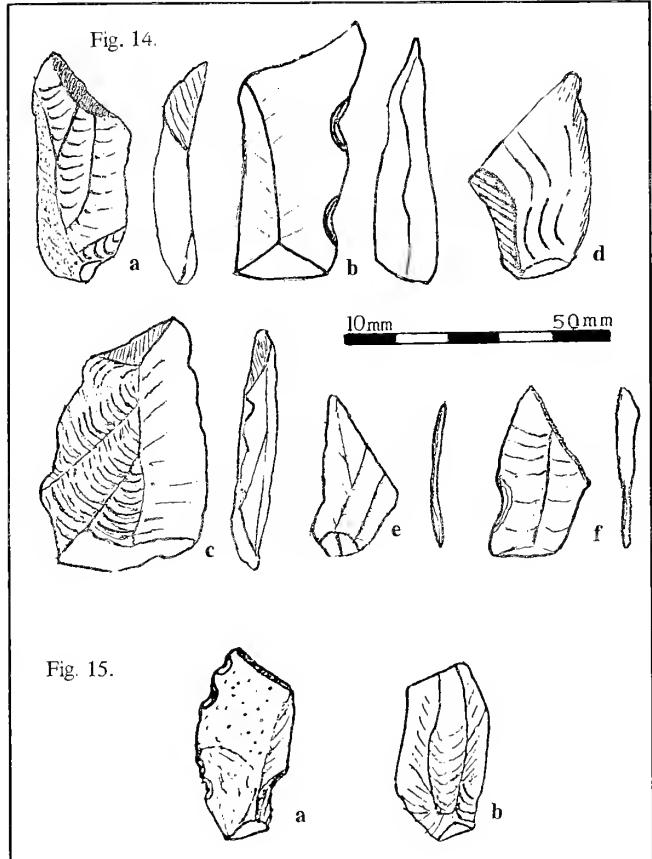


**Fig. 12. Pièces esquilleées:** a - hornfels, c3 sterile B; b - sandstone, a2 sterile B.

**Fig.13. Outil éscailleés:** sandstone, c3 sterile A.

The striking platforms of a measured sample are mostly plain (58%) while the remainder is retouched (42%). The dominating shape of the striking platform is irregular and round. The mean lengths and breadths for striking platforms are 32 mm and 9 mm respectively. The bulb of percussion is clear in 61.2% of the cases.

The mean length, breadth, and thickness of a measured sample of flakes are 46 mm, 38.6 mm and 13.7 mm respectively. The material from the two sterile layers differs in terms of mean length, breath and thickness. Sterile B means are 55.8 mm, 46.6 mm and 17 mm respectively while Sterile A means are 45 mm, 37 mm and 12 mm respectively.



**Fig. 14. Burins:** a - hornfels, C6 sterile A; b - sandstone, D6 sterile B; c - hornfels, b3 sterile B; d - hornfels, D6 sterile B; e - hornfels, E6 sterile B; f - hornfels, b2 sterile A.

**Fig. 15. Gravers:** a - hornfels, a2 sterile B; b - quartzite, b3 sterile B.

(e). **Flake-blades:** These are elongated flakes resembling blades. They are at least twice as long as they are broad and may have roughly parallel or convergent sides (Fig. 8a) (Opperman 1984). In the Ndondondwane assemblage flake-blades make up 21% of waste category. The striking platforms show evidence of preparation through small flake removals or crushing. The striking platforms for convergent flake-blades are mostly irregular and round with more plain (53%) than retouched (47%) platforms.

A measured sample for mean length, breadth and thickness of convergent flake blades is 43.3 mm, 37.4 mm and 11.5 mm respectively. The mean for lengths and breadths of the striking platforms is 28.9 mm and 9 mm respectively, while the bulb of percussion is clear for 68.9% of the sample.

Whole flake-blades make up 2.7% of the waste category. The striking platform is mainly retouched (70%) with the remaining 30% plain. The dominating shape is irregular and rounded, while the dominating dorsal scar pattern is random. The mean length and breadth for a measured sample of the striking platform is 13mm and 6mm respectively and for 25% of the sample the bulb of percussion is clear.

The mean length, breath and thickness for parallel

flake blades is 51.2 mm, 24 mm and 11 mm respectively. The means differ between the sterile layers as Sterile B indicates 56.3 mm, 26.8 mm and 14 mm respectively and Sterile A 46.1 mm, 21.5 mm and 8.1 mm respectively.

(f). **Flake-blade sections (Fig. 8b):** These make up 17% of the waste category.

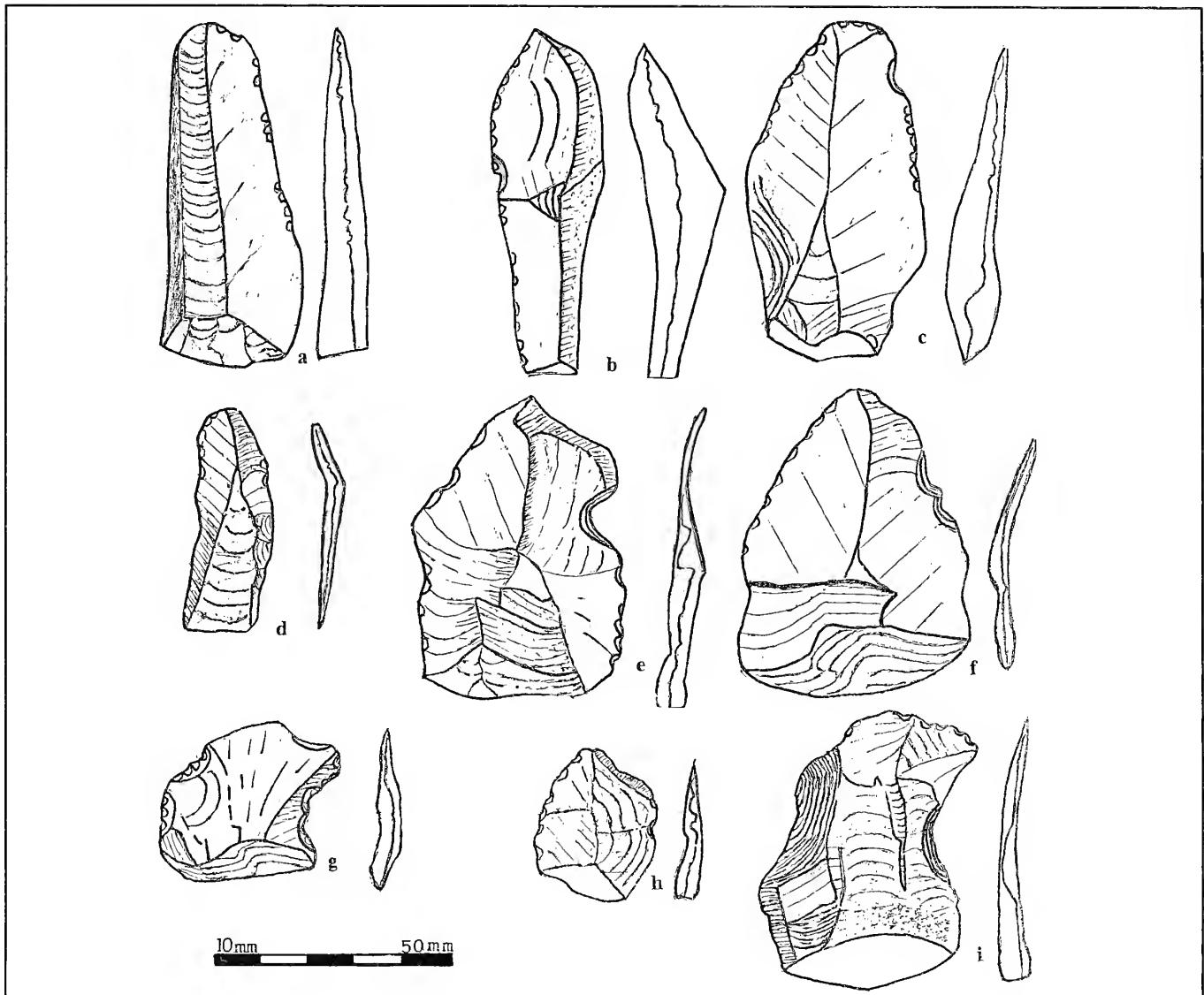
The striking platform on convergent flake-blade proximal sections is mostly plain (68.3%) with retouch amounting to only 31.7%. The shape of the striking platform is generally rounded (32.6%) or peaked (27.9%). Parallel flake blades have dominantly plain striking platforms (82.4%) and with only 17% retouched. The dominant shape is flat followed by peaked and irregular. Means for sections with the distal surface missing are 43 mm, 22 mm and 5mm respectively while for sections with the proximal missing amount to 46 mm, 31 mm and 10 mm respectively.

(g) **Triangular flakes (Fig. 9b):** These artifacts show minimal trimming at their distal ends in order to make pointed ends and mostly are made on irregular flakes. Triangular flakes are one of the typical features of the MSA industries (Kuman 1989). Highly prepared triangular flakes with dorsal scars and dorsal ridge display faceting of the butt. They are equivalent to Bordes' second order Levallois points.

(h) **Core scrapers (Fig. 10b):** These are scrapers made on pebbles with large crude flakes removed from one end at an angle varying from 90° to 135° the base being left flat and un-flaked, and finer scraper retouch along almost the entire flake edge (J. Deacon 1965). Nine of these artifacts were founded at Ndondondwane. They display convex working edges (Fig. 10b). surface missing are 43 mm, 22 mm and 5mm respectively while for sections with the proximal missing amount to 46 mm, 31 mm and 10 mm respectively. (g) **Triangular flakes (Fig. 9b):** These artifacts show minimal trimming at their distal ends in order to make pointed ends and mostly are made on irregular flakes. Triangular flakes are one of the typical features of the MSA industries (Kuman 1989). Highly prepared triangular flakes with dorsal scars and dorsal ridge display faceting of the butt. They are equivalent to Bordes' second order Levallois points.

(h) **Core scrapers (Fig. 10b):** These are scrapers made on pebbles with large crude flakes removed from one end at an angle varying from 90° to 135° the base being left flat and un-flaked, and finer scraper retouch along almost the entire flake edge (J. Deacon 1965). Nine of these artifacts were founded at Ndondondwane. They display convex working edges (Fig. 10b).

(i). **Gouges (Fig. 11):** These artifacts are made from small used-up cores or flake fragment and are variable in form though the best tend to be rectangular. Characteristics of these tools are scale-like flaking from



**Fig. 16. Utilized artefacts:** a - hornfels flake blade, C6 sterile A'; b - hornfels blade, c5 sterile B; c - hornfels blade, c5 sterile B; d - hornfels irregular flake, B5 sterile B; e - hornfels flake, D6 sterile B; f - sandstone triangular flake, c3 sterile B; g - hornfels flake, C6 sterile B; h - hornfels flake, a2 sterile B; i - quartz flake, B3 sterile B.

opposite ends which are produced by the use of the tool between hammer stone and the objective (Malan 1955). They display concave/curved working edges and seven were recognized from Ndondondwane assemblage.

(j) *Pièces esquillées* (Fig. 12): These display battered concave edges and opposite striking platforms that are chisel-like in profile. They also exhibit secondary crushing due to use (J. Deacon 1972; Barham 1986). Only one was found at Ndondondwane.

(k) *Outils éscailleés* (Fig. 13): These are tools that have been deliberately flaked to form a chisel-like form (J. Deacon 1972). This curved edge may be battered or covered with small utilization scars (Barham 1986). Two are present in Ndondondwane assemblage.

(l) Burins (Fig. 14): These artifacts are made in such a variety of forms and by so many varying techniques that

they have been the subject of many complicated classifications, resulting in a confusion of technology (Malan 1948). They are spoiled or damaged flakes or flake tools or cores from which narrow flakes had been obtained with great or less success (Heese 1946). They were used for cutting bone and also presumably for cutting across the grain of wood. Six burins were found at Ndondondwane.

(m). Gravers (Fig. 15): These artifacts display retouch on one side of the distal end. Two were found at Ndondondwane.

(n). Lance head (Fig 19): These artifacts are made on flakes with faceted striking platforms. They vary considerably in proportions, size and form. The best specimens are worked completely over both faces by pressure flaking and are double pointed and narrow in relation to their length (willow leaf). Broader

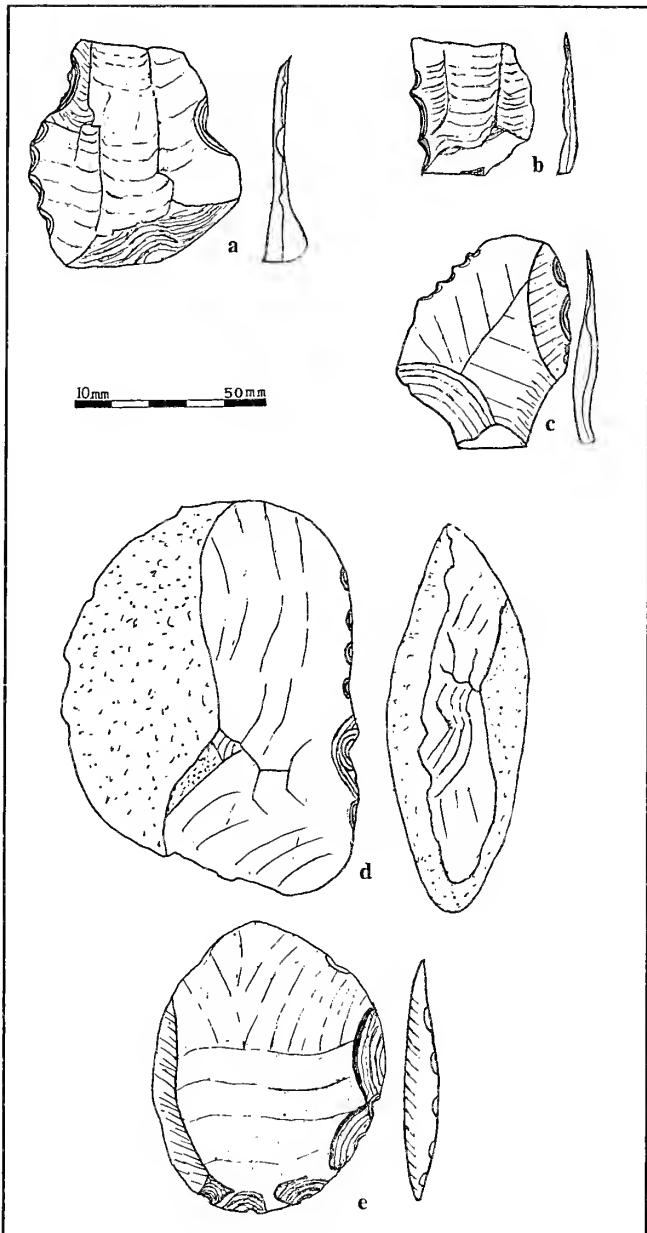


Fig. 17. Retouched artefacts: a - quartzite proximal flake blade section, b3 sterile B; b - quartzite medial flake blade section c5 sterile B; c - sandstone triangular flake, D6 sterile A; d - quartzite pebble chopper, c5 sterile B; e - sandstone flake, b2 sterile B.

specimens are known as laurel – leaf forms (Malan 1955). Sometimes the edges were chipped to make them saw-like (Goodwin 1946; Beater 1959). A lance head from Ndondondwane assemblage conforms to Malan's second type i.e. broader specimens (laurel leaf forms). It has a faceted striking platform, is broad, shows utilization marks and is partially bifaced.

#### Utilized Artifacts

This category makes up 2.73% of the whole assemblage. Utilization is in the form of edge damage such as light retouch. On 34 flakes and three cores (two from quartzite and one from hornfels) the damage is in the form of a notch with polish and negative flake scars. One lance-head

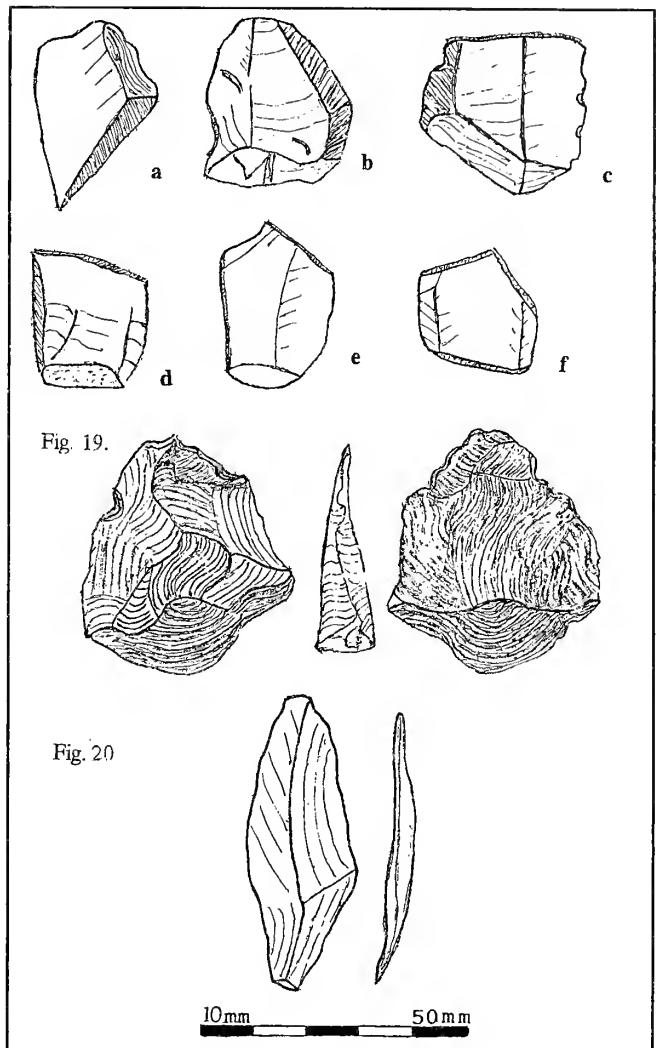


Fig. 18. Trapezioids or miscellaneous retouched pieces: a - hornfels, b4 sterile A; b - hornfels, c5 sterile B; c - hornfels, c4 sterile A; d - hornfels, E6 sterile B; e - hornfels, D6 sterile B; f - hornfels, B6 sterile B.

Fig. 19. Lance head (pressure flaked): sandstone D6, sterile B.

Fig. 20. Artifact showing intermediate punch (sandstone blade from b3 sterile B).

displays utilization marks on both left and right sides.

Four flake-blades display edge damage, notching and light utilization marks. Two rubbing stones, of unequal size from hornfels, have their dorsal surfaces flattened through use and also display light chip scars. An EIA grinding stone fragment was also found. Utilized artifacts are shown in figure 16. This category also includes the *pièces esquillées* and *outils éscalés* mentioned above.

#### Retouched Artifacts

This category makes up 2.54% of the whole assemblage. Seven flakes and two choppers have been retouched. The choppers are broken river pebbles trimmed to a steep edge which demonstrates utilization marks. Other retouched specimens displays denticulation, including a proximal section of a flake, a medial section of a flake blade and a

triangular flake (Figs 17a, b & c). Another slightly circular flake has a cortical dorsal side. The right side is trimmed with big shallow flake scars while the left side is trimmed to a steep edge (Fig. 17e). Eight triangular flakes (all hornfels) display retouch (oblique truncation) that is steep and confined to the end of artefacts. The retouch is on one side of the flake in order to make a pointed end (Fig 9).

Scrapers (6) have convex (4), concave (1) and circular (1) retouched edges. Four scrapers are made from hornfels while the other two are from quartzite. Core scrapers (8) mainly display convex scraper edges due to trimming. The striking platform and bulb of percussion are also present. Most core scrapers are made from hornfels.

Other retouched pieces include burins. Five burins are made from hornfels and one from the sandstone. They have battered concave edges. The gravers (2) made from gouges are made from hornfels (5) and two from quartzite hornfels also fall under this category.

Miscellaneous retouched pieces include trapezoids (5) and other obliquely truncated pieces and which are shown in figure 18.

## Raw Material

Raw materials of different artifact types indicate that waste is dominated by quartzite (33%) which is followed by quartz (29%), hornfels (23%) and sandstone (14.8%). These categories constitute 97.1% of the whole assemblage.

Amongst the utilized and retouched artifacts the sequence of occurrence of different raw material changes. Quartzite remains dominant (55.6%) for utilized artifacts, hornfels (35.6), while quartz make up the rest (8.9%). Sandstone is not represented. Hornfels predominates (75%) for retouched artefacts, quartzite and sandstone (18%). Quartz is not represented. Hornfels appear to have been the preferred raw material for making formal artifacts.

Raw material representation for the artefact types shows that chunks are mostly from quartz (43.6%) and quartzite (30.3%). Flakes (whole and broken) are dominated by quartzite (48.7%) while flake blades (whole and broken) are mostly from hornfels (40.25%). Cores are dominated by hornfels (38.2%) followed by quartzite (29.1%), sandstone (27.3%) and quartz (5.5%).

## DISCUSSION

Ndondondwane stone age material was not recovered *in situ* and therefore no attention was given to the distribution pattern of the stone tools.

Although this assemblage originally comes from a surface scatter it is possible make associations with other Stone Age sites in South Africa. The technology used for artifact manufacturing belongs to the MSA. Ridge and striking platform preparation as well as the presence of core rejuvenation flakes make the association possible (Thackeray & Kelly 1988). The technique of pressure flaking was recognized on one lance head. According to Goodwin (1946) lance heads is the final development of the Middle Stone Age derived from the concept of the bifacial handaxe.

Miscellaneous retouched pieces such as trapezoids and truncated pieces were recovered at Border Cave (Beaumont *et al.* 1978) and Umhlatuzana (Kaplan 1990).

A very small and plain striking platform shows the use of the intermediate punch during the flaking process and this feature was recognized in the Ndondondwane material (Fig. 20). This feature was also recognized at Border Cave (Beaumont 1978) and Grassridge (Opperman 1984).

The striking platform of Ndondondwane Stone Age material is mainly plain (58%) and retouched (42%) a condition that differs from the surface collection of artifacts (mainly with faceted striking platforms) collected by the British Army Officers during the Anglo – Zulu War. At Ndondondwane only 8% of the striking platforms are faceted mainly from the retouched category while cortical and shattered striking platforms are also present. According to Mitchell (1988) artifacts were collected from the surface at Isandlwana, Newcastle, Rorke's Drift, Utrecht and Pietermaritzburg by British Army Officers. This material is dominated by hornfels (80%), a condition also noted for Ndondondwane material (retouched category). The report indicates that the material is invariably patinated and the Ndondondwane material shows a similar high degree of patination for both sterile layers. There was a difference between the sterile layers where sterile B has a higher percentage of patinated material

On typological grounds, the Ndondondwane assemblage contains no definitive evidence of formal tools that can reliably be associated with the MSA apart from the lance head, gravers, burins, gouges, *pièces esquillées* and *outils écaillés*. On the other hand the Stone Age material recovered at Umhlatuzana, Border Cave, the surface collection from Muden (Farnden 1968) as well as that of the British Army Officers (Mitchell 1988) had an abundance of formal tools such as points and scrapers. Truncated pieces (including oblique) are abundant at Umhlatuzana as is the case with the Ndondondwane material

It is not possible to distinguish the time period involved at Ndondondwane. Blade lengths are very variable but this has also been observed from the well-dated MSA sample from Strathalan Cave B (29000 – 22000 BP) (Opperman & Heydenrych 1990). One would expect more chips with the use of quartz as a raw material.

Some of the stratified sites display material that is transitional from MSA to LSA, such as Border Cave and Umhlatuzana. The LSA artefacts at Ndondondwane include endscrapers (5), a backed scrapper and a hollow scrapper.

Hollow scrapers were also found at Muden. *Pièces esquillées* and *outils écaillés* were found at Ndondondwane, and at Umhlatuzana *outils écaillés* were reported by Kaplan (1990).

The occurrence of the notched utilization indicates the possible use of sticks or bone mountings for scrapers. Gouges, *pièces esquillées* and *outils écaillés* are known as wood working tools (Malan 1955; Sampson 1973) and support the suggestion that woodworking was taking place. The presence and description of this MSA material together with the EIA component gives a more complete picture of the prehistory of the site.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Amafa for allowing me to use the premises during the analysis of the stone tools. I am grateful to Dr H.Opperman who personally gave me advice during the analysis.

## REFERENCES

Barham, L.1986. The Bipolar technique in Southern Africa: A replication experiment. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* **42**:45-50

Beater, B.E.1959. Middle and Later Stone Age Assemblages near Heatonville, Zululand. *South African Archeological Bulletin* Vol X IV: 71 – 74.

Beaumont, B.P., de Villiers, H.& Vogel, J.C.1978. Modern Man in sub – Saharan Africa prior to 49000 BP: a review and evaluation with particular reference to border Cave. *South African Journal of Science* **74**: 401 – 419.

Deacon, J.1965. Cultural material from the Gamtoos Valley Shelters. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* Vol. XX **80** :193-200

Deacon, J. 1972. Wilton : An assessment after fifty years. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* **27**: 10-48

Farden, T.H. 1968. Notes on Middle Stone Age sites in the Muden/Keats Drift areas of Natal, *South African Archeological Bulletin* **23**: 40 – 4.

Goodwin, A.J.H. 1946. Earlier, Middle and Later Stone Age. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* Vol 1 **3**: 74-76.

Greenfield, H.J., Van Schalkwyk, L. & Jongsma, T.L. 1997. The Early Iron Age site of Ndondondwane, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa: preliminary results on the 1995 excavations. *Southern African Field Archaeology* **7**:61-77.

Greenfield, H.J., Van Schalkwyk, L.& Jongsma, T.L. 2000. Surface and subsurface reconnaissance at Ndondondwane: preliminary results of the 1995-97 field season. *Southern African Field Archaeology* **9**:5-16.

Heese, C.H.T D. 1946. Waste matter and Leavings. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* **3**: 77-80.

Kaplan, J. 1990. The Umhlatuzana Rock Shelter sequence: 100 000 years of Stone Age history. *Natal Museum Journal of Humanities* **2**: 1 – 94.

Kuman, K. 1989. Floribad and # Gi: The contribution of open-air sites to the study of the Middle Stone Age in Southern Africa. Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Pennsylvania.

Malan, B.D.1948. New Middle Stone Age sites near Utrecht, Natal. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* **3**:89-95.

Malan, B.D. 1955. The Archaeology of the Tunnel Cave and Skildegat Kop, Fish Hoek, Cape of Good Hope. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* **10**: 3-9

Mitchell, P.J. 1988. Archaeological collection from the Anglo-Zulu War in the collection of the British Museum. *South African Field Archaeology* **7**:12– 19.

Opperman, H 1984. An excavation of a Middle Stone Age deposit in Grassridge, Rockshelter, Sterkstroom district, Cape Province. *Fort Hare Papers*: 1–12.

Opperman, H. & Heydenrych, B. 1990. A 22 000 year – old Middle Stone Age camp site with plant food remains from the North – Eastern Cape. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* **45**: 93 – 99.

Sampson, C.G.1973. Variability and change in the Nachikufan Industry of Zambia. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* Vol. **28**: 78 – 89.

Thackeray, A.I. & Kelly, A.J. 1988. A technological analysis of Middle Stone Age assemblage antecedent to the Howieson's Poort at Klassies Main site. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* **43**: 15 – 26.

# ARCHAEOLOGY ALONG THE KAVANGO RIVER/NAMIBIA

JÜRGEN RICHTER

*University of Cologne,  
Institute für Ur- und Frühgeschichte,  
Weyertal 125, D-50923, Köln*

## ABSTRACT

Recent research of the DFG (German Science Foundation) SFB 389 ACACIA, the University of Cologne, yielded 73 archaeological sites along the southern banks of Kavango River/Namibia. Surface collections and some small excavations produced prehistoric artefacts, stratigraphic information and radiocarbon dates which have been used to establish a preliminary cultural sequence from the Early Stone Age to the late Iron Age. Ceramic LSA assemblages from the 1st millennium AD or earlier are among the relatively early occurrences of pottery in southern Africa. The Iron Age, beginning prior to AD 1000 can be divided into an earlier and a later stage which is represented by remnants of melting furnaces, settlements and abundant artefacts.

## INTRODUCTION

Three Rivers form the southern and the northern frontiers of Namibia: The Orange River in the South of Namibia, the Kunene River in the North-West and the Kavango River in the North-East. These are the only permanent rivers in Namibia. Both the Kunene and the Orange Rivers flow in a westerly direction into the Atlantic. By contrast, the Kavango River, originating in central Angola to the North, flows in a south-east direction, ending in Botswana in an enormous inland delta. The large drainage system of the Kavango River separates Namibia's north-eastern territories from the rest of the country which is otherwise characterized by a drainage system focusing on the Atlantic Ocean. At the same time, the northern strip of Namibia, from Ovamboland to Caprivi, receives more than 500 mm of annual precipitation, thus allowing for agriculture during the rainy season from March to October. Along the central Kavango River the annual rainfall averages about 600 mm, which represents the maximum rainfall value throughout Namibia (Leser 1982:88).

Traditionally, the Kavango River was never regarded as a frontier, but as a linear oasis within the dry savannah landscape of north-eastern Namibia. Sections of the River marked the centre of neighbouring territories of the Kwan-gali, the Mbunza, the Sambyu and the Gciriku people, all of Bantu origin like their western neighbours the Ovambo. Following their oral tradition, Bantu people have occupied the central Kavango area for less than 500 years. Khoisan people are regarded as the only early inhabitants of the region.

The region is well known to students of African languages, due to the fact that no less than four different

Bantu language groups are concentrated in a relatively small area. The local wealth of languages has attracted long term linguistic research which has resulted in the development of historical models. W.G.Möhlig has spent three decades of research in the Kavango region. Among his complex historical models, a particular, now extinct language group, deserves special attention. Its speakers, reported as the Tchaube people, may have subsisted on mere hunting and gathering, with no food production, but at the same time producing iron (Fleisch & Möhlig 2002).

## RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH BY ACACIA/SFB 389 OF COLOGNE UNIVERSITY

Archaeological knowledge about the Kavango region has always been very poor. Few archaeologists visited the area (Shackley 1986; Kinahan 1986; Jacobson 1987). For a long time, B. Sandelowsky (Windhoek) was the only archaeologist to undertake archaeological research in the area. At Vungu-Vungu she found an important Late Iron Age settlement, and her excavation at Kapako proved that iron production was present in the area as early as AD 840 (Sandelowsky 1979).

Since the ACACIA project ("Arid Climate, Adaptation and Cultural Innovation in Africa") was accepted by the German Research Council (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) as a special research unit "SFB 389" at Cologne University (Vogelsang *et al.* 2002), linguistic and archaeological investigations in the Kavango region have entered a new stage of research.

From 1996 to 1999, teams of Cologne University (Institut für Ur- und Frühgeschichte/Institute of Prehistoric Archaeology) conducted several archaeological surveys

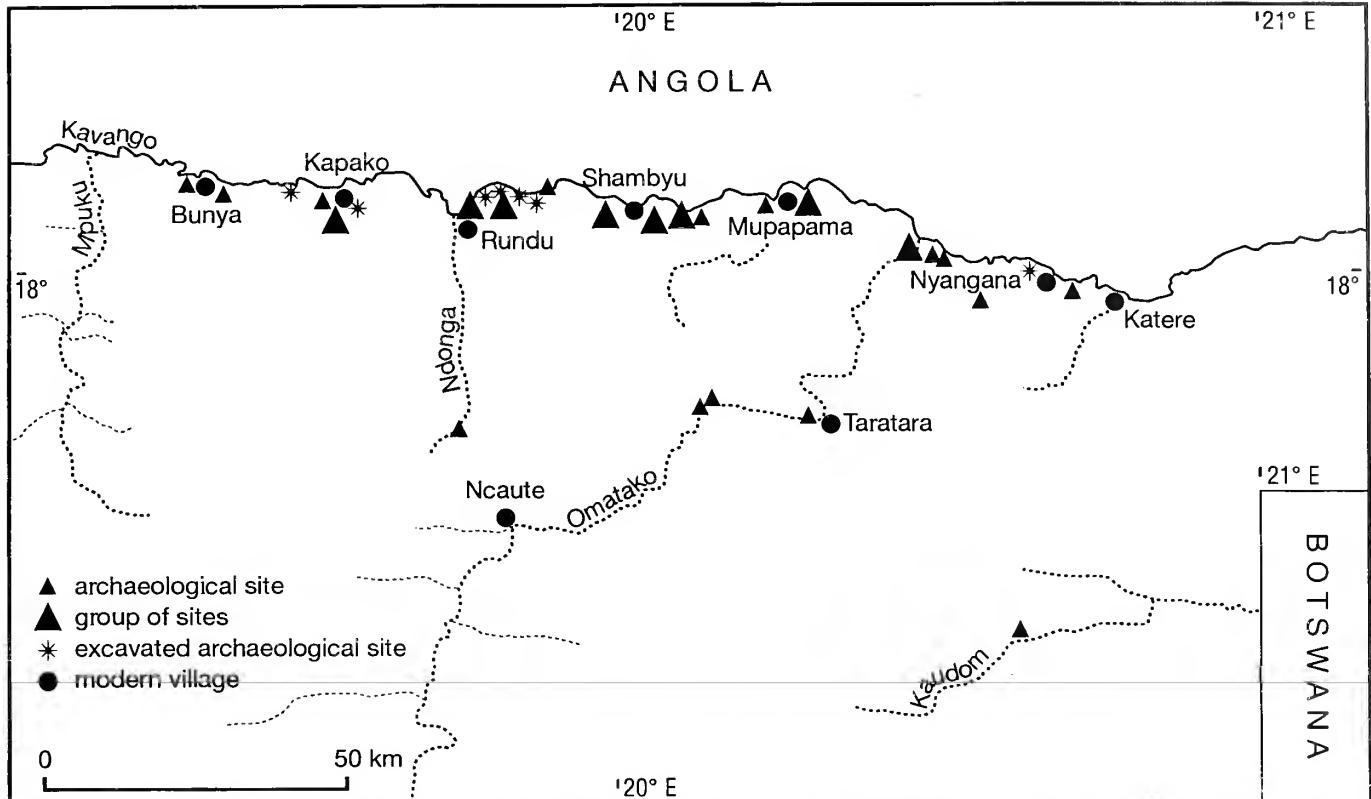


Fig. 1. Map of Rundu District, Namibia, with archaeological sites known before AD 2000.

along the banks of the Kavango River over a distance of about 100 km from east to west. The surveys had to be restricted to the southern banks of the Kavango River which belong to the Namibian territory. During the 1996-1999 campaigns, the whole Namibian territory around Rundu, the district capital, was accessible to the expeditions. The Angolan territory, north of the river, has never been visited. The civil war situation and the presence of UNITA made research impossible on the Angolan side. Due to the political climate from 2000 to 2002 no fieldwork has been carried out on both sites of the borderline.

Archaeological prospection was hampered by huge alluvial deposits covering more than two thirds of the river zone with no archaeological material exposed. Surveys had to concentrate on the eroded banks of the river (*Prallhang* banks) or on cliffs where the river had cut rare quartzite outcrops and calcareous crusts. This situation has led to distinct clusters of mapped archaeological sites. Thus, the archaeological map (Fig. 1) may not be interpreted in terms of prehistoric settlement patterns but must be understood as a mere, still incomplete, negative report of the alluvium distribution.

When surveying an area, where the archaeological situation is practically unknown, archaeologists must first aim at obtaining regional chronology of cultural development. A historical scale is essential for any further archaeological research, irrelevant of the direction these studies may take. More than 70 archaeological sites (see catalogue at the end of this paper) have been discovered so far and the principle stages of prehistoric occupation are already visible (for an overview of artefact inventories see Table 1).

#### PLEISTOCENE OCCUPATION: EARLY STONE AGE, MIDDLE STONE AGE AND EARLY LATER STONE AGE

Flakes and cores, possibly attributable to a kind of 'Developed Oldowan' Industry, hint at the earliest occupation of the area by *Homo erectus*, more than one million years ago (Site N99/14, Catalogue No. 7) (Table 2).

Acheulian handaxes, flakes and cores of the 'Victoria West' method of artefact production attest a later stage of the Early Stone Age occupation, c. 500 000-130 000 years ago (f.e. Site N98/21, Catalogue No. 16; Fig. 2). Small numbers of Middle Stone Age sites, elsewhere connected with archaic *Homo sapiens*, are found in the Kavango region. Blades and flakes of the characteristic 'Levallois' method of artefact production are to be found at such sites (f.e. N98/22, Catalogue No. 11).

The Pleistocene/Holocene transition saw microlithic industries (Fig. 3) of the Messum-Menongue Complex (Richter 1993), dating to around BC 10 000. This is named after Menongue in Central Angola and Messum in the Central Namib Desert where microliths occur along side bifacially worked leaf-shaped points. Microlithic industries are attributed to the Later Stone Age, the Messum-Menongue Complex therefore comprises an early stage of this development. The artefacts illustrated come from the collection of the late Rev. Hartmann of Shambyu mission and are reported to be of local origin from the vicinity of the mission. The Cologne team was unable to localise the exact sites where the large number of related artefacts (bifacial leafpoints and large segments) were found. Parts of Hartmann's collection, containing abundant examples of

Table 1. Kavango Area. Artefact finds from 1996, 1998 and 1999 field surveys.

Site	Lithics n	Pottery n	Ornament n	Bones n	Slag/Ore n	Charcoal grs	Others n
N96/03-2	-	3	2	-	-	-	-
N96/03-3	10	92	-	-	-	0,52	4
N96/04	2	11	-	-	-	-	-
N96/05	1	14	-	1	-	-	-
N96/06	-	7	-	-	-	-	-
N96/07	1	2	-	-	-	-	-
N96/08	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
N96/09	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
N96/10	2	-	-	-	1	-	-
N96/11	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
N96/12	5	1	-	-	1	-	-
N96/14	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
N96/15	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
N96/16	7	1	-	-	-	-	-
<hr/>							
N98/14	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
N98/15	67	-	-	-	-	1,27	2
N98/16	35	1	-	-	-	-	-
N98/17	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
N98/18	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
N98/19	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
N98/20	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
N98/21	27	-	-	-	-	-	-
N98/22	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
N98/23	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
N98/24	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
N98/25	1	16	-	-	1	-	1
N98/26	3	1	-	-	-	-	-
N98/27	9	65	1	2	-	39,36	1
N98/28	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
N98/29	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
N98/30	4	7	-	4	2	-	-
N98/31	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
N98/32	119	613	103	161	59	164,7	111
N98/32-1	-	2	-	-	1	-	-
N98/32-2	70	1305	76	6	2	0,69	9
N98/33	4	13	-	-	-	-	-
N98/34	7	8	-	-	2	-	-
N98/35	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
N98/36	-	5	-	-	-	-	-
N98/37	1	1	-	-	2	-	-
N98/38	1	6	-	-	1	-	-
N98/39	23	88	-	1	1	-	5
N98/39-1	201	197	12	84	1	8,8	132
N98/40	5	1	-	1	-	-	-
N98/41	11	3	-	-	1	-	-
N98/42	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
<hr/>							
N99/14	8	2	-	3	-	-	-
N99/15	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
N99/16	17	-	-	-	-	-	1
N99/17	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
N99/18	7	-	-	-	-	-	2
N99/19	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
N99/20	3	47	2	25	-	131,9	63
N99/21	175	415	31	750	41	1	29

**Table 2. Archaeological Chronology of the Kavango Area.**

Estimated Calendric age	Cultural unit	Sites along Kavango River	Omatako Khaudom
1900-2000 AD	modern Shambyu, Giriku Bunza	Sarasungu Katere	Tamsu
1500 AD	Late Iron Age	Vungu- Vungu	
1000AD	Early Iron Age	Kapako	
500 AD 0 1000 BC	Ceramic Late Stone Age	Ruuga Karangana	
5000 BC 10 000 BC	Late Stone Age  Early LSA Messum- Menongue Complex	Rundu Shambyu Mission  Ngandu Lodge 2	Taratara
50 000BC 100 000 BC	Middle Stone Age  Upper Early Stone Age (Levallois)	Nyangana	Ncaute
500 000 BC 1 000 000 BC	Lower Early Stone Age (Victoria-West)  Developed Oldowan	Ngandu Lodge 1  Mawanje	

all Palaeolithic stages, are on display at the Shambyu Mission Museum, other parts are kept at the National Museum/Windhoek and at the Swakopmund Museum.

The fact that some very old prehistoric sites are still surprisingly well preserved illustrates the relative geomorphological equilibrium of some stretches of the Kavango river bank throughout the entire Pleistocene period.

#### HOLOCENE OCCUPATION: LATER STONE AGE, CERAMIC LATER STONE AGE, IRON AGE

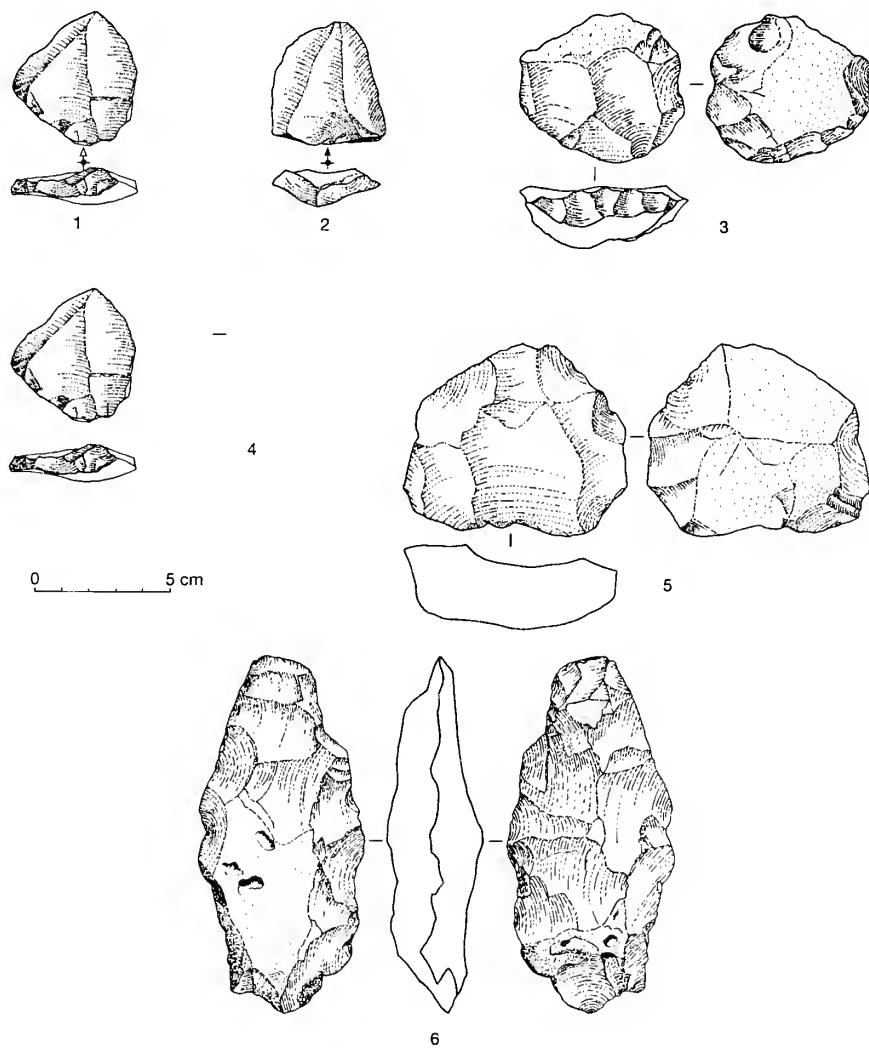
By contrast, and most surprisingly, the evidence for early and mid-Holocene occupation of the area has remained very poor. Later Stone Age microlithic industries are, however, well known from neighbouring regions on the southern African subcontinent. Moreover, the private collection of the late Rev. Hartmann of Shambyu mission comprises

several thousand such microliths, information on their origin is unfortunately lacking. The Cologne expeditions have localised only a few undisturbed Later Stone Age sites (Fig. 3), all without organic preservation. Only one LSA site comes from a stratigraphic sequence near Rundu (N98/15, Catalogue No. 13).

Regionally, the Later Stone Age can be divided into an earlier pre-ceramic stage and a later ceramic stage. The Ceramic Later Stone Age (CLSA) is comparably well represented by a group of sites west of Rundu. These sites yielded microlithic tools along with pottery and, occasionally, with charcoal and bones. Based on the stratigraphic sequence at Ruuga, the local CLSA can now be dated to the 1st millennium AD (minimum age; Site N98/39, Catalogue No. 3). Some time ago CLSA occurrences still represented a rare phenomenon in southern Africa. Most of the pottery discovered was thought to have been introduced into the subcontinent by immigrating farmers of the Bantu language group in the Iron Age (*cf.* Hall 1987). Nevertheless, the last decades of research have seen an increasing number of CLSA occurrences, mainly in the southwestern part of the subcontinent, in the Cape Province, Central Namibia and Northern Namibia. Bones of domestic sheep connected with some of these finds suggest the presence of an early herding economy 2000 years ago, long before the first Bantu farmers reached southern Africa. The presence, in the same assemblages, of so many microlithic projectile points argues for hunting as another important economic component of the CLSA.

Most archaeological sites of the Kavango region can be attributed to the Iron Age which covers the last millennium. An earlier stage of the Iron age was already attested by B. Sandelowsky, at Kapako (N74/1, Catalogue No. 5), dated to the end of the first millennium AD. Between AD 1000 and AD 1500, a hiatus of 500 years interrupts the archaeological record. A later stage of the Iron Age is well represented by an abundance of sites dated to the last 500 years, the most important site of this stage being Vungu-Vungu (Sandelowsky's excavation N74/2, Catalogue No. 29, and our own excavation N98/32, Catalogue No. 34). While classification and dating of Iron Age sites are still under intensive analysis, two major economic systems can already be recognized:

The first system is characterized by large areas of iron ore exploitation. Here, close to the river banks near Nyangana, thousands of pits were dug into ferricrete layers, a few inches under the present surface (N98/45, Catalogue No. 55 and N98/46, Catalogue No. 60). Heaps of debris and used quartzite hammer stones are visible on the surface. As any traces of connected iron production or settlement are absent, these exploitation areas must be regarded as parts of a widespread economic system. Large amounts of iron ore were collected and presumably transported, on the Kavango River, to the centres of iron production yet to be found. Iron ingots and artefacts were produced for trade, not only for domestic use. Chieftains probably dominated such a system which might well have been part of the trade networks of the "Great Zimbabwe" period. Calendric data



**Fig. 2. Early Stone Age. Sandstone artefacts from Site N98/21 near Rundu.** 1-5 Flakes and cores from the Victoria-West Concept. 1 Eclat à débordement partiel, 2 préférentiel flake with dièdre platform, 3 small core with faceted platform, 4 "horseshoe" Victoria-West core with faceted platform, 4 "horseshoe" Victoria-West core, 6 handaxe with sharp cutting edge (upper face, left).

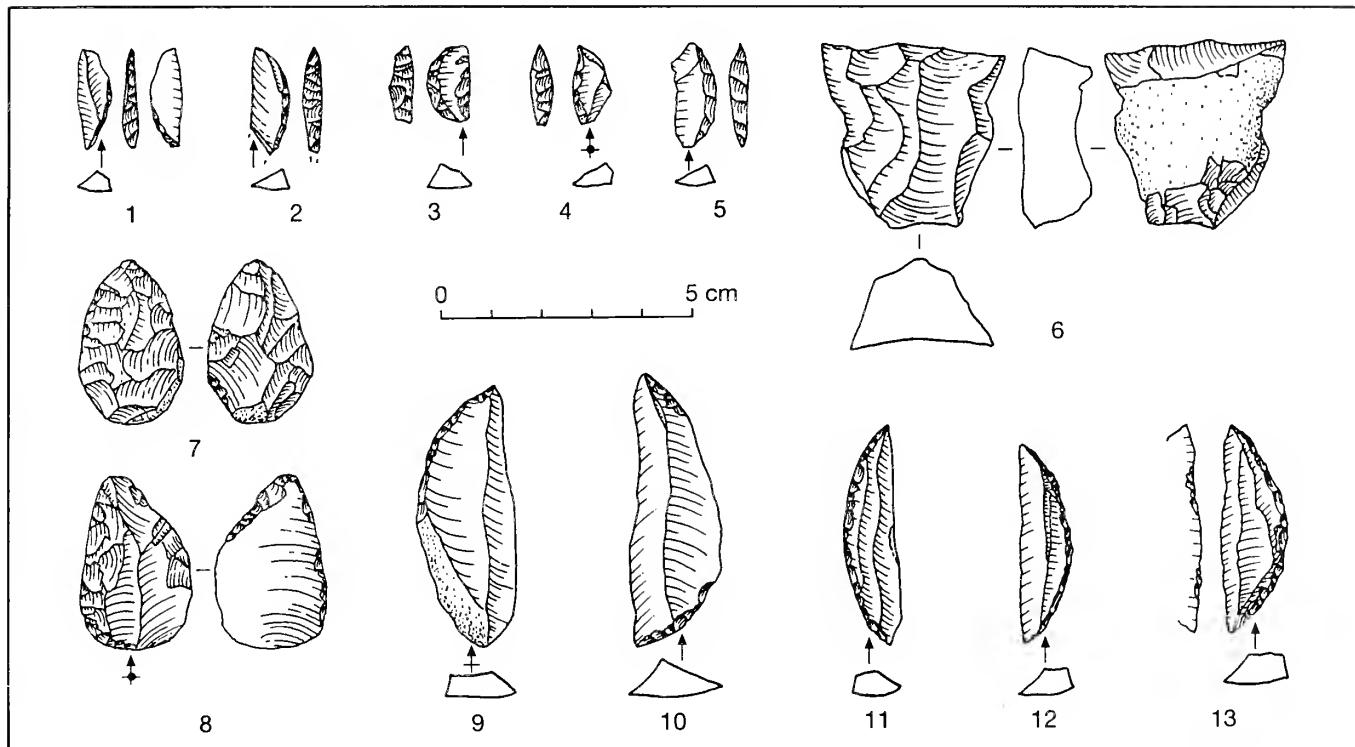
as yet are not available, but it is well possible that the first system preceded the second one described below, as the second occurred only during the last 500 years. At present, however, a contemporaneous existence of both economic systems cannot be ruled out.

The second system is characterized by small exploitation sites. Here, iron ore was collected superficially, and iron production took place in nearby furnaces within small settlement sites. At Vungu-Vungu (N98/32, Catalogue No. 34), an excavation of a settlement yielded abundant archaeological material. Pottery, stone artefacts, ostrich eggshell ornaments, glass beads, charcoal and bone have been found along side the remnants of iron production such as tuyeres, slag and fragments of the furnaces. Charcoal and bone produced Radiocarbon dates falling within the last three centuries. Charcoal analysis proved highly specialised wood procurement, concentrated on *Acacia* species. Animal bones were, most surprisingly and in some accordance with

the "Tchaube" linguistic model mentioned above most exclusively from wild animals. While hunting is now attested as an important economic component for Vungu-Vungu, evidence is still ambiguous about the interpretation of the system as a whole. Was Vungu-Vungu a settlement of iron producing hunter-gatherers such as the reconstructed Tschaupe group? Was it an ephemeral hunting stand and an iron production site of Bantu farmers living elsewhere such as it is contested for the Gciriku group (Fisch 1994)?

At the present preliminary stage, the Pleistocene and Early/Mid-Holocene sequence can only be derived from comparisons with neighbouring regions and from the late Holocene cultural sequence which is of local origin and based on three main arguments:

1. The stratigraphy found by B. Sandelowsky at Kapako shows that the cross-hatching rim decoration found in



**Fig. 3. Below (7-13). Early Later Stone Age from unknown site near Shambyu mission (coll. Rev. Hartmann, courtesy Swakopmund Museum). 7, 8, 10-13 Chalcedony, 9 sandstone. 7 Small leafpoint, 8 bifacially worked point, 9 backed point, 10 backed trapeze, 11-13 backed segments. Above (1-6) Later Stone Age from site N98/15 near Rundu. 1, 3, 4, 6 Chalcedony, 2, 5 sandstone. 1, 2, 5 Microlithic segments, 3 backed microlithic sidescraper, 4 microlithic sidescraper, 6 unidirectional bladelet core.**

the upper layer at Kapako is younger than herringbone decoration found in the lower layer at the site (Sandelowsky 1979:55). Cross-hatching under the rim is the most common pattern at Vungu-Vungu.

2. The seriation of pottery decoration suggests that Vungu-Vungu is more recent than Ruuga, which might represent the oldest stage of pottery development.
3. Radiocarbon dates which date Ruuga to the 1st millennium AD or earlier, Kapako to ca AD 1000 and Vungu-Vungu to the last half millennium.

#### LATE HOLOCENE CHRONOLOGY: RELATIVE DATING BY SERIATION OF POTTERY ATTRIBUTES

Surface collection and excavation delivered a reasonable sample of potsherds (see Table 1: Inventory of archaeological objects). First comparison of ceramic decoration suggested that a very regular grammar of shapes and motives here to be found on vessels from all different Kavango localities and possible time ranges:

1. All pots were round-based, bowl-shaped or bag-shaped. There are no feet. There is not a single fragment of a flat bottom. There are no handles, lugs or nobs (Fig. 4).

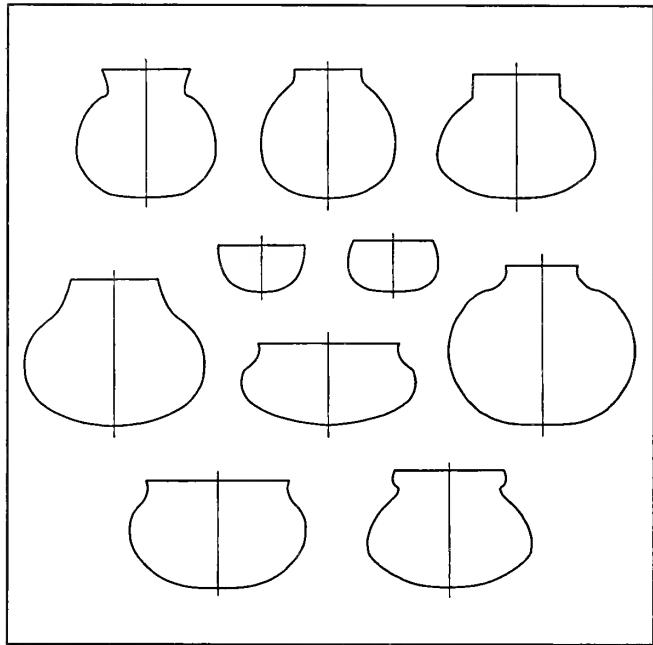
2. Overall decoration never occurs and body decoration occurs only from the shoulder upwards, either under the rim or at the neck/shoulder and sometimes on the rim.

3. All motifs are organized in bands around the vessel.

Currently, potsherds from 108 vessels have undergone an attribute analysis. Attributes were: kind of fragment (rimsherd, bodysherd), weight, thickness, fabric, rim shape, rim structure, decoration/body, decoration/rim. 24 different patterns of body decoration and 20 different patterns of rim decoration have been observed so far. The decorations are made by the incision, impression and modelling of relief bands. Different techniques may be combined within one pattern.

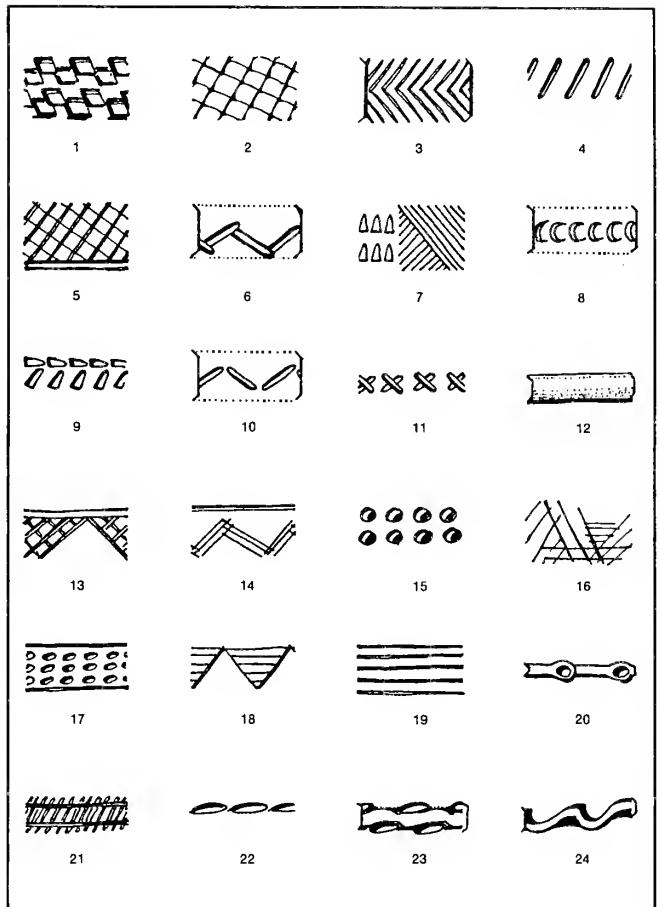
#### Body decoration (Fig. 5)

- W1 Two interfering bands of parallel rhombic double-impressions, carried out by a double-toothed tool.
- W2 Band of impressed cross-hatching, carried out by a serrated tool (river shell?).
- W3 Band of incised herring-bone patterns on relief band.
- W4 Band of impressed parallel, oblique, coarse strokes, can also be applied to a relief band.
- W5 Band of incised cross-hatching on relief band, may be accompanied by a grooved line.



**Fig. 4. Ceramic Later Stone Age, Iron Age and modern:** Shapes of ceramic vessels (not to scale). Most of the indicated shapes are preliminary, as the vast majority of potsherds do not allow for exact reconstructions.

- W6 Zig-zag band of impressed oblique strokes, on relief band.
- W7 Interchanging groups of incised, oblique parallel lines combined with triangular impressions carried out by a three toothed tool.
- W8 Band of impressed crescents on relief band.
- W9 Band of impressed horizontal triangles accompanied by a band of vertical triangles.
- W10 Open zig-zag band of impressed oblique strokes, separated by small gaps, on relief band.
- W11 Band of impressed crosses, can also be applied to a relief band.
- W12 Relief line.
- W13 Band of hanging triangles, filled by incised cross-hatching.
- W14 Zig-zag band of incised triple lines, may be accompanied by incised horizontal line.
- W15 Band of double-impressions.
- W16 Incised, horizontal double line, with irregular cross-hatching.
- W17 Band of multiple impressions, lower and upper side accompanied by horizontal grooves.
- W18 Band of hanging triangles filled by incised horizontal lines.
- W19 Band of incised multiple horizontal lines
- W20 Thin relief band, interrupted by distant single impressions.
- W21 Incised, horizontal double line, crossed by incised oblique hatching.
- W22 Band of horizontal thumbnail impressions.
- W23 Thin relief band, upper and lower side accompanied by impressed, alternating strokes.



**Fig. 5. Ceramic Later Stone Age, Iron Age and modern:** Body (neck and shoulder) decoration, patterns W1 to W24.

- W2 Thin relief band, upper and lower side accompanied by alternating thumbnail impressions.

#### Rim decoration (Fig. 6)

- R1 Band of incised cross-hatching on relief band, may be accompanied by a grooved line.
- R2 Band of impressed parallel, oblique, coarse strokes
- R3 Impressed cross-hatching combined with horizontal group of lines, separated by vertical groove.
- R4 Bundle of incised thin horizontal lines, crossed by thin distant, vertical or oblique double-lines.
- R5 Band of incised cross-hatching on relief band, lower cross-hatching denser than upper.
- R6 Three or four incised, parallel horizontal lines.
- R7 Narrow band of incised, distant cross-hatching.
- R8 Band of incised herring-bones.
- R9 Band of double-impressions.
- R10 Band of mat-impression of unclear origin.
- R11 Band of impressed parallel, oblique, coarse strokes, accompanied by horizontal groove.
- R12 Band of impressed, distant horizontal strokes.
- R13 Narrow band of very regularly impressed, oblique parallel strokes.

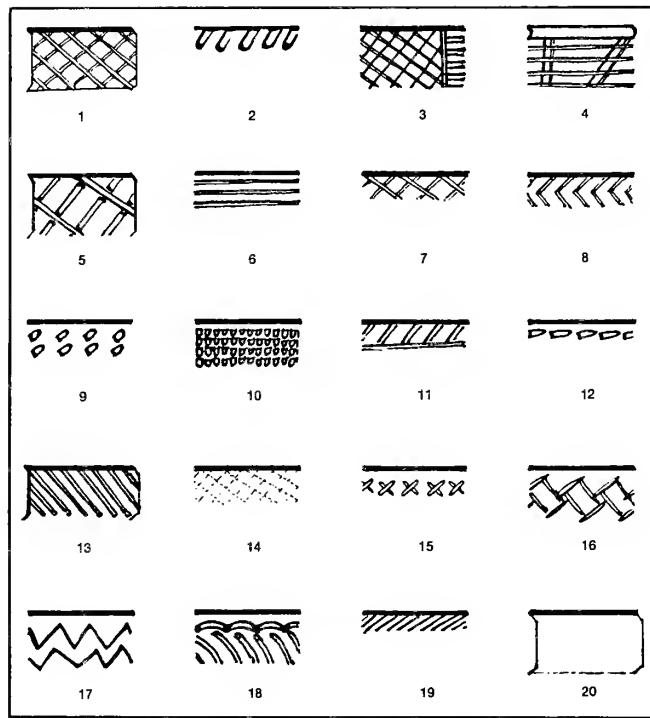


Fig. 6. Ceramic Later Stone Age, Iron Age and modern: Rim decoration, patterns R1 to R20.

- R14B and of incised cross-hatching, surface smoothed after decoration.
- R15 Band of hanging triangles, filled by incised cross-hatching.
- R16 Band of impressed, coarse cross-hatching.
- R17 Double-band of incised zig-zag lines, carried out on dry surface.
- R18 Band of impressed horizontal crescents, accompanied by band of rocker-stamps.
- R19 Narrow band of incised, oblique parallel lines
- R20 Plain relief band.

As can easily be seen, body (shoulder and neck) decoration follows the same principles as rim decoration. Bands of impressed or incised patterns are abundant, sometimes on top of a relief band and sometimes accompanied and delimited by an incised line. The relative homogeneity of patterns and the broad resemblance of decoration rules has made a statistical analysis possible, based on the above catalogue of decorative bands and carried out by the WinBASP (Irvin Scollar, Bonn) correspondence analysis software.

The table (Table 3) gives a selection of the most abundant patterns and some important sites. Patterns occurring only one or two times and small sites have been excluded for this simplified seriation table. The table also contains some surface finds and the contemporaneity of the assemblages (lines of the table) is as yet not confirmed. Nevertheless, the table already shows an order of distribution from East to West and, if compared with radiocarbon dates (Table 4), from more recent to more

ancient assemblages, thus replicating the sequence Vungu-Vungu - Kapako - Ruuga.

### LATE HOLOCENE CHRONOLOGY: ABSOLUTE DATING

Organic material suitable for radiocarbon dating is very difficult to acquire in the Kavango region. The acid soils of the region tend to dissolve bone collagen in a very short time span. Bones older than 200 years usually do not contain any collagen, even if the overall conservation of bone seems to be fairly good. Thus, archaeological dating must almost fully rely on charcoal samples. As modern local land use economy includes annual burning of bushes and trees, charcoal is ubiquitous throughout the whole dry savannah region. Moreover, the river banks of the Kavango attract all kinds of everyday activities, such as fire making and cooking. As a consequence, all charcoal samples used for dating had to come from stratigraphic context. The 15 radiocarbon dates available so far cluster in three groups: The first group dates the CLSA from Ruuga, indicating a 1st millennium AD or earlier age. The second group is around 1000 A.D. and dates the Early Iron Age of Kapako. The third group is from the last 500 years and dates the late Iron Age from Vungu-Vungu and Nyangana (Table 4).

### CONCLUSIONS

Four very restricted surveys of the Kavango area, between 1996 and 1999 have yielded a rough framework of a regional cultural sequence with Early Stone Age, Middle Stone Age, Early Later Stone Age, Later Stone Age, Early Iron Age, Late Iron Age and modern occurrences. For the most ancient finds, calendar dates are not available and the archaeological context is still vague. Regional characteristics can be described only from the ELSA onwards.

During the Late Pleistocene/Early Holocene ELSA the region was part of a south Angolan/North Nambian context area (Messum-Menongue complex). Early/Mid Holocene LSA assemblages do not show any regional difference, compared to the neighbouring Wilton/LSA microlithic complexes.

During the late Holocene, cultural development was essentially different from the rest of Namibia and, from time to time, parallels Angolan and southern Zambian traditions, as indicated by pottery decoration.

The ceramic LSA (*e.g.* near Ruuga) occurs to be one of the relatively ancient occurrences of pottery along side micro-lithic tools in southern Africa. As yet, nothing is known about the economy of the Kavango CLSA during the late second and first millennium BC. As stratigraphies are rare and of low quality admixture of CLSA assemblages with younger elements cannot be ruled out. Thus, the characteristics of CLSA pottery can only be described on a preliminary level and request more in-depth investigation. Nevertheless, the very early uncalibrated date, of 3600 BP for the earliest CLSA pottery at Ruuga must be taken with caution.

Table 3. Presence/absence seriation results of some selected decoration patterns and archaeological sites.

site	locality	W20	W6	W4	R1	R5	W10	R2	W5	W11	W15
N98/43	Ndonga	X			X						
N96/05	Shambyu		X		X						
N98/32 surface	Vungu-Vungu	X	X	X	X	X			X		
N98/32 excav.	Vungu-Vungu		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
N98/30	Vungu-Vungu				X	X			X	X	
N98/38	Kapako							X	X		
N98/39	Ruuga				X				X	X	X
N98/33	Rundu								X		X
n occurrences		2	3	2	6	3	2	2	6	2	2

Table 4. Radiocarbon dates from the Kavango region (all uncal. BP).

KN-5190	Sarasungu N98/27	charcoal	280+-30
KN-5191	Vungu Vungu N98/32	charcoal	85+-30
KN-5313	Vungu Vungu N98/32	bone collagene	20+-40
KN-5329	Vungu Vungu N98/32	bone collagene	40 +-60
KN-5330	Vungu Vungu N98/32	bone collagene	100+-50
Pta-236	Vungu-Vungu N74/1	charcoal	320+-45
KN-5375	Nyangana N98/43	charcoal	120+-35
KN-5376	Nyangana N98/43	charcoal	235+-35
KN-5377	Nyangana N98/43	charcoal	220+-35
Pta-234	Kapako N74/2	charcoal	840+-50
KN-5574	Kapako, lower	charcoal	180+-33
KN-5575	Kapako, upper	charcoal	1070+-49
KN-5576	Ruuga N98/39, upper	charcoal	3265+-35
KN-5577	Ruuga N98/39, central	charcoal	1440+-35
KN-5578	Ruuga N98/39, lower	charcoal	2670+-40

Iron technology occurs prior to AD 1000 in the region (e.g. near Kapako). This is connected with frequent herring-bone pottery decoration which is matched by similar decoration patterns from pottery found at the Caninguiri fortified site in Central Angola (Ervedosa 1980).

Late Iron Age sites from the last half millennium are most abundant in the Kavango region. Near Vungu-Vungu, a very dense cluster of sites has been found with iron melting furnaces, iron ore sources and settlements. Hunting connected with iron melting and processing played a major role in the economy of the Vungu-Vungu inhabitants who might be identified either with the Shambyu or with the Tchaube people.

layer eroding from a steep slope along the Kavango river. Archaeological site extending over 100 x 150 m. Pottery (Vungu-Vungu type; Fig. 9) from cultural layer. Surface collection from cultural layer eroding from the slope of the Kavango River bank.

## 2. Site N98/40, Karrangana/Rundu District, 19.24E; 17.52S, LIA, LSA

Area 1: Slight hill between Mbunza and Karrangana villages. Abandoned settlement with some old trees and vegetation-free area. Loose artefact scatter of 100 x 80 m. Pottery (Kapako Type, Fig. 9) and LSA stone artefacts from a harvested maize field. Surface collection.

Area 2: North of the road Rundu-Nkurunkuru (50 m south of area 1). Dune, partly destroyed by road construction. Eroding dune displays a stratigraphic section of 3 m height. Patinated blade fragment from natural section. Surface collection.

## 3. Site N98/39, Ruuga/Rundu District, 19.31E; 17.52S, LSA, IA

Western part of Ruuga village. Shallow hill with northern

## CATALOGUE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

The order of listed sites is from west to east (Figs 7 & 8).

### 1. Site N97/09, Bunja/Rundu District, 19.21E; 17.51S, LIA

On the ground of the Roman Catholic Mission of Bunja, about 45 km west of Rundu town. 30-40 cm dark cultural

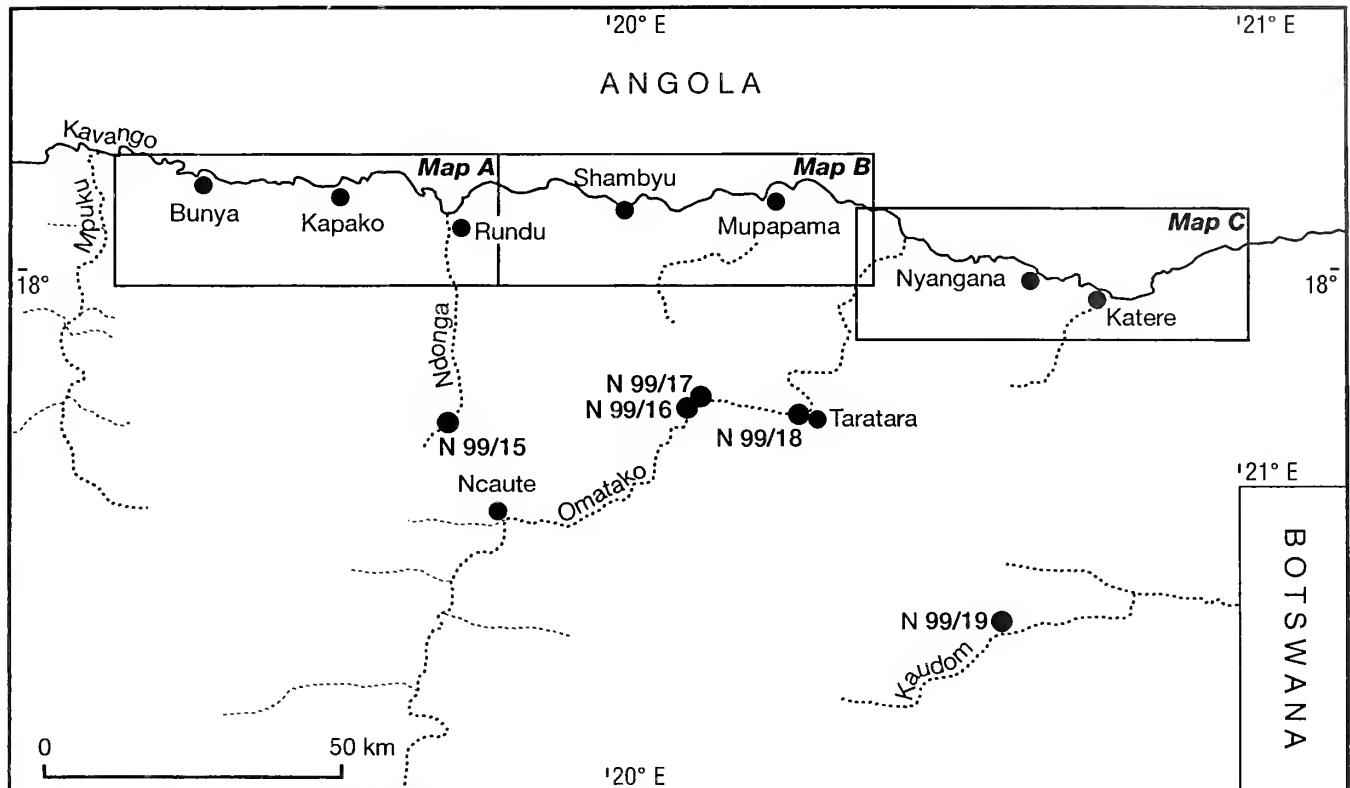


Fig. 7. Map of Rundu District, Namibia. Overview and archaeological sites near Ndonga, Omatako and Kaudom dry river beds. For Kavago sites, see detailed maps A-C.

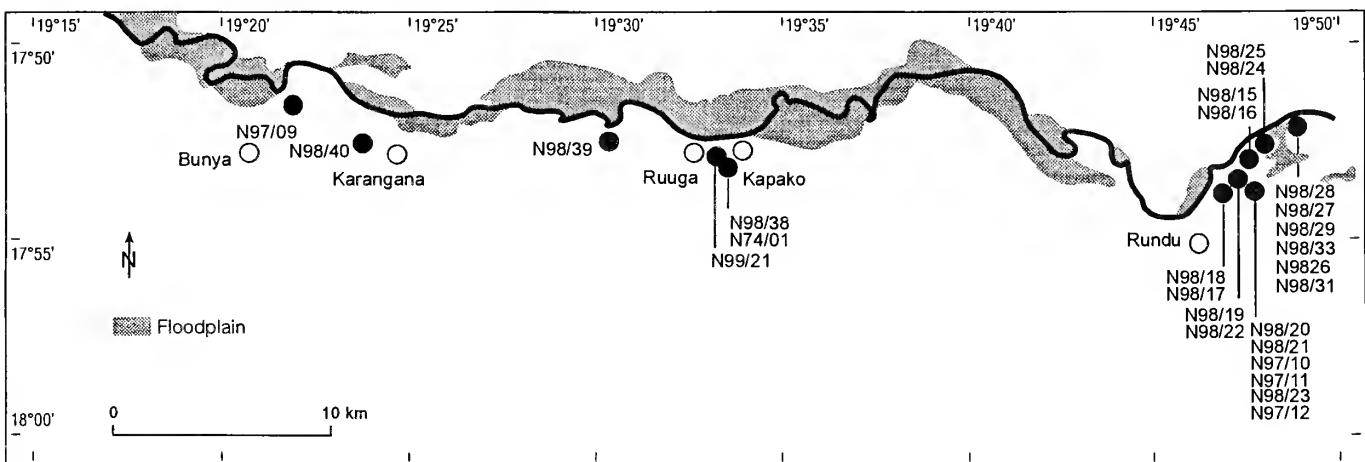


Fig. 8. Map of Rundu District, Namibia. Overview and archaeological sites near Ndonga, Omatako and Kaudom dry river beds. For Kavago sites, see detailed maps A-C.

Prallhang slope along the Kavango river. On the top abandoned settlement site with old tree and vegetation-free area (Fig. 10). Hill consisting of a calcareous crust. Extension of the archaeological site marked by an artefact scatter of 300 x 100 m. Decorated (Kapako and Vungu-Vungu Type, Figs 9 & 11) and undecorated pottery, stone artefacts and iron slags from a harvested maize field. Trial excavation of 3 m<sup>2</sup>, to a depth of 1 m. Archaeological finds excavated by artificial levels within homogenous, fine grained grey-brownish sand with silty and humic components.

Within the stratigraphic section, one occupational

horizon could be identified which delivered three somewhat ambiguous radiocarbon dates (see Table 4), indicating a minimum age, of the archaeological finds of ca 1440 BP (uncal.) Or AD 600 (uncal.).

#### 4. Site N98/38, Kapako/Rundu District, 19.33E; 17.52S, LIA.

Located on a cliff consisting of a calcareous crust. The cliff has a northern and eastern slope along the Kavango River. The steep slopes are products of the fluvial erosion. At the top of cliff a large Acacia tree marks an old farmsite with loose artefact scatter. Archaeological finds from a 100

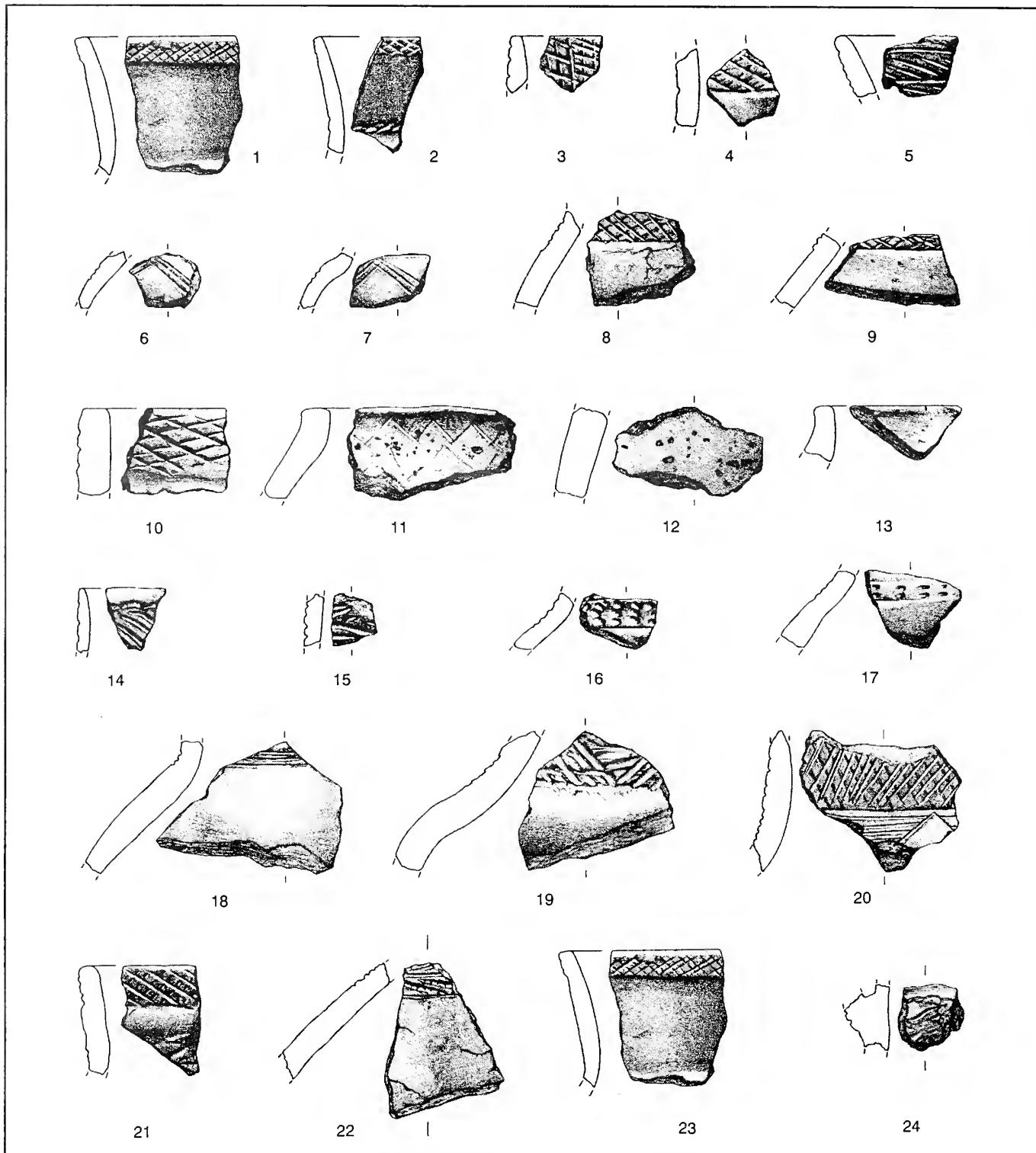


Fig. 9. Pottery from archaeological sites west of Rundu/Namibia. 1-4: Bunja N97/09. 5: Karangana N98/40. 6-24: Ruuga N98/39. Scale: half-size.

x 100 m area on a harvested maize field. Pottery (Vungu-Vungu-Type and others, Fig. 11), glass and iron. The site presumably represents the last stage of iron melting during the 19/20th century (Fig. 12).

#### 5. Site N74/1, Kapako/Rundu District, 19.33E; 17.52S, IA

Beatrice Sandelowsky's excavation of 1974 (Sandelowsky 1979). The test trench near Kapako Mission

delivered a stratigraphic sequence with two principal archaeological horizons. The sequence displays the Kapako ceramic stage as older, and the Vungu-Vungu ceramic stage as younger.

#### 6. Site N99/21, Kapako/Rundu District, 19.34E; 17.52S, IA

About 250 m west of Kapako Mission, on a cliff over the Kavango River, an artefact scatter with pottery (Kapako



Fig. 10. View of site N98/39. Kavango River in the background.

Type and Vungu-Vungu Type, Fig. 13) and ostrich eggshell beads was located. A test trench of 2 x 2 m was excavated to a maximum depth of 50 cm where a calcareous crust stopped excavation. Stratigraphy (Fig. 14).

1. Surface, loose sand.
2. Shallow pit of consolidated, dark-brown, silty sand.
3. Loose brown-grey fine-grained sand, disturbed. Archaeological finds.
4. Consolidated, fine-grained, dark-brown Sand with charcoal and bone fragments. Archaeological finds, fragmented skull of a child in upright position.
5. Consolidated, light brown, fine-grained sand. Archaeological finds.
6. Slightly consolidated, light brown, fine-grained sand. Sterile.
7. Calcareous crust.

Most probably, the ostrich eggshell beads were part of the skull burial.

#### 7. Site N99/14, Mawanje/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.44E; 17.58S, ESA

In a gravel quarry west of the road from Rundu to Ncaute, near Mawanje village, a quaternary sequence with artefacts and bones from 4,5 m depth was observed. Surface collection.

#### 8. Site N98/18, Ngandu-West/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.46E; 17.54S, MSA

In front of a huge sandstone cliff at the northern fringe of Rundu town. Small alluvial peninsula called Sarasungu. On alluvial ground, about 150 m north of the sandstone cliff, sand dune with MSA artefacts. Surface collection.

#### 9. Site N98/17, Ngandu-West/Rundu/Rundu District, 19°46E; 17.54S, ESA, LSA

Near N98/18, some steps downhill from Ngandu Lodge, a tourist bungalow complex on the edge of the Rundu sandstone cliff, the slope with abundant debris accidentally exploited for use in roadworks. Exploitation work

uncovered 20 x 20 m artefact scatter with MSA quartzite flakes. Surface collection.

#### 10. Site N98/19, Ngandu-West/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.46E; 17.54S, MSA

Site number N 98/19 refers to single, redeposited MSA quartzite artefacts found on the surface between N98/17 and N98/18 on alluvial ground with sand dunes in front of the sandstone cliff. Surface collection.

#### 11. Site N98/22, Ngandu-East/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.46E; 17.54S, MSA, LSA

East of the indicated coordinate, on an area extending over 600 m from east to west, on alluvial ground in front of the Rundu sandstone cliff. Area marked by extensive quarry exploitation of sandstone debris. Single, redeposited MSA and LSA artefacts of quartzite and chalcedony. Large number of profile sections within the indicated area caused by exploitation works. Surface collection.

#### 12. Site N98/16, Sarasungu-South/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.46E; 17.53S, MSA, LSA

100 m West of track connecting Ngandu Lodge and Sarasungu Lodge. Dune area with large commercial sand excavation pits displaying several profiles. Sections show a 4 m sequence of alluvial and aeolic sands with an incorporated calcareous crust. Fragments of the calcareous crust contained MSA artefacts.

Artefact scatter of 10 x 10 m in an area where the calcareous crust is uncovered *in situ*. Surface finds of MSA artefacts of quartzite and LSA artefacts of chalcedony also displaying varnish surfaces. These finds originate presumably from surfaces of sand dunes deposited on top of the calcareous crust. Wind erosion displaced dunes until the recent, hard level of the calcareous crust was revealed. Imperishable artefacts were left behind on the recent projection surface. Surface collection.

#### 13. Site N98/15, Sarasungu-South/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.46E; 17.53S, LSA

25 m East of the track connecting Ngandu Lodge and Sarasungu Lodge. Dune field on alluvial ground with large Eucalyptus plantation. 3 x 2 m surface scatter of LSA artefacts near the edge of a sand exploitation pit.

Artefact scatter investigated by 3 x 2 m test trench with LSA *in situ* horizon between 0,35 - 0,6 m depth. The excavated section and a second section, revealed by the sand exploitation works at 20 m further north, displayed a principal stratigraphic sequence of 2 m depth. The stratigraphy consists of a sequence of still water sediments, fluvial sediments and, on top, dune sands. The calcareous crust (*cf.* N98/16), found only 125 m away from here, was not present within the stratigraphic section and is also not to be observed in the surrounding 20.000 m<sup>2</sup>. The crust was probably eroded by an old branch of the Kavango river which must have flown through the N98/15 area. The LSA occupation must have taken place at a time when the dunes had already been deposited on the river bank. Stratigraphy:

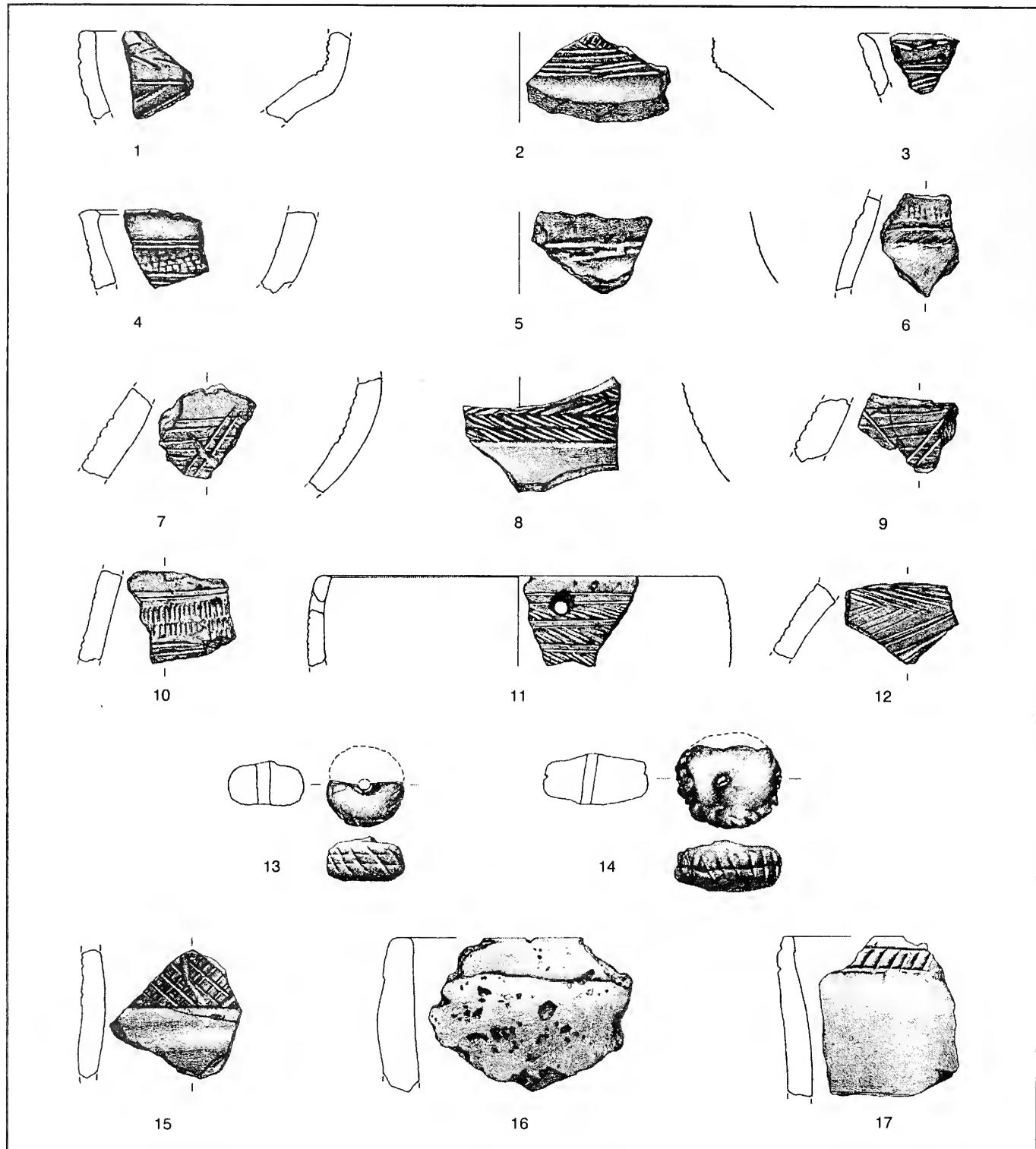


Fig. 11. Pottery from archaeological sites west of Rundu/Namibia. 1-4: Bunja N97/09. 5: Karangana N98/40. 6-24: Ruuga N98/39. Scale: half-size.

1. Loose, light-yellow sand, 0-12 cm.
2. Grey, fluvial sand, 13-18 cm.
3. Slightly consolidated, yellow dune sand, 19-32 cm.
4. Thin humic band, 33-34 cm.
5. Consolidated, yellow dune sand, archaeological finds, 35-60 cm.
6. Consolidated, grey-brown dune sand, nodular, "eisenfleckig", 61-92 cm.
7. Fluvial, fine-grained, more or less consolidated sandy

8. layers, 92-122 cm.
9. Very consolidated, fluvial, brown and white sandy layers, 123-160 cm.
10. Laminated, consolidated grey silty layers of limnic origin, 161-163 cm.
11. Interchanging grey silty and sandy layers (fluvial and limnic), 164-190 cm.
12. Site N99/20, Sarasungu-South/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.46E; 17.53S, modern.



**Fig. 12. Site N98/38. Eroded calcareous crust at the Kavango River bank.**

East of the track from Ngandu Lodge to Sarasungu Lodge, in a dunefield with eucalyptus trees, near site N98/15, surface finds such as glass, pottery (Fig. 13), beads and bones indicate the remnants of a former settlement site. A test trench of 3 x 2 m was excavated to a maximum depth of 0,7m. This yielded a posthole and part of a rubbish pit.

**15. Site N98/20, Ngandu-East/Rundu/Rundu District, 19°46E; 17.54S, MSA, LSA**

450 m East of track between Rundu town and Sarasungu Lodge and 100 m north of sandstone cliff. Erosion channel in an eroded bank along the Kavango River. Natural 2 m high section uncovered by the river. Homogenous, loose, grey sand with stones and pebbles. The sediment does not show any layers. 0,4-0,8 m below surface some stone artefacts of MSA and LSA (chips, flakes, backed bladelet). Surface collection.

**16. Site N98/21, Ngandu-East/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.46E; 17.54S, ESA**

410 m East of track connecting Rundu town and Sarasungu Lodge. 50 m west of site N98/20. 100 m north of sandstone cliff in an eroded bank along the Kavango River. Stone artefact scatter of 20 x 20 m. ESA artefacts (handaxe, flakes) from redeposited gravels (Fig. 15). Surface collection (Fig. 2).

**17. Site N97/10, Sarasungu/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.46E; 17.54S, LSA**

Eastern end of Rundu town, near crossroad to Sarasungu Lodge, 200 m east of the track. Superficial artefact scatter of 10 x 10 m, some eroding from a given profile. LSA assemblage with microlithic segment and flakes. Surface collection.

**18. Site N97/11, Sarasungu/ Rundu/Rundu District, 19.46E; 17.54S, LSA**

300 m East of N97/10. Single find of a microlithic segment of chalcedony. Surface collection.

**19. Site N98/23, Sarasungu/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.46E; 17.53S, modern**

10 m South of the track between Rundu and Sarasungu Lodge, 200 m south of the Lodge. 2 x 2 m artefact scatter with recent pottery (Fig. 16). Surface collection.

**20. Site N97/12, Rundu/Rundu District, 19.46E; 17.54S, LSA**

800 m East of N97/10 at the eastern entrance of Rundu town. Profile section which extends to N97/10. Small artefact scatter 1 x 1 m above the profile. A microlithic segment and a flake, both of chalcedony. Surface collection.

**21. Site N98/24, Immigration Office/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.47E; 17.52S, MSA**

On the southern banks of Kavango River, 50 m east of the abandoned police station. Artefact scatter of 50 x 30 m. Several quartzite flakes of MSA. The quartzite raw material was taken from huge quartzite boulders incorporated in a calcareous crust which is exposed near the site, on both banks of the Kavango River. Surface collection.

**22. Site N98/25, Immigration Office/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.47E; 17.52S, LIA**

Sand dune on the Kavango River bank, 1 km east of Sarasungu Lodge. Loose 5 x 5 m artefact scatter with slag and pottery (Fig. 16). Several fireplaces were visible. 10 m east of the site another fireplace with some potsherds. Surface collection.

**23. Site N98/28, Immigration Office/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.47E; 17.52S, modern**

On the southern banks of Kavango River, 100 m west of site N98/27 and marked by the remnants of a small house. Personal communication by neighbours identified the ruin as remnants of a military post which was erected after displacement of the former occupants of the area in the 1970's. The archaeological site, 7 m west of the ruin, is a stone knapping pile of 3 x 4 m with abundant quartzite artefacts. Among the artefacts are no formal tools, but chips, chunks, flakes and cores. The artefacts represent stone artefact production of very recent age. Surface collection.

**24. Site N98/27, Immigration Office/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.47E; 17.52S, LIA**

Sand dune on southern bank of Kavango River. 100 m east of site N98/25. 250 x 50 m Area cleaned of vegetation by burning. Artefact scatter of 50 x 30 m with potsherds (Fig. 16). In short distance ruins of a stone house. Surface collection and excavation of a small test trench in order that datable material be collected. For Radiocarbon date see Table 4.

**25. Site N98/29, Immigration Office/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.47E; 17.52S, modern**

Sand dune on southern bank of Kavango River. 100 m East of site N98/27. Two artefact scatters, each 20 x 30 m with potsherds. Surface collection.

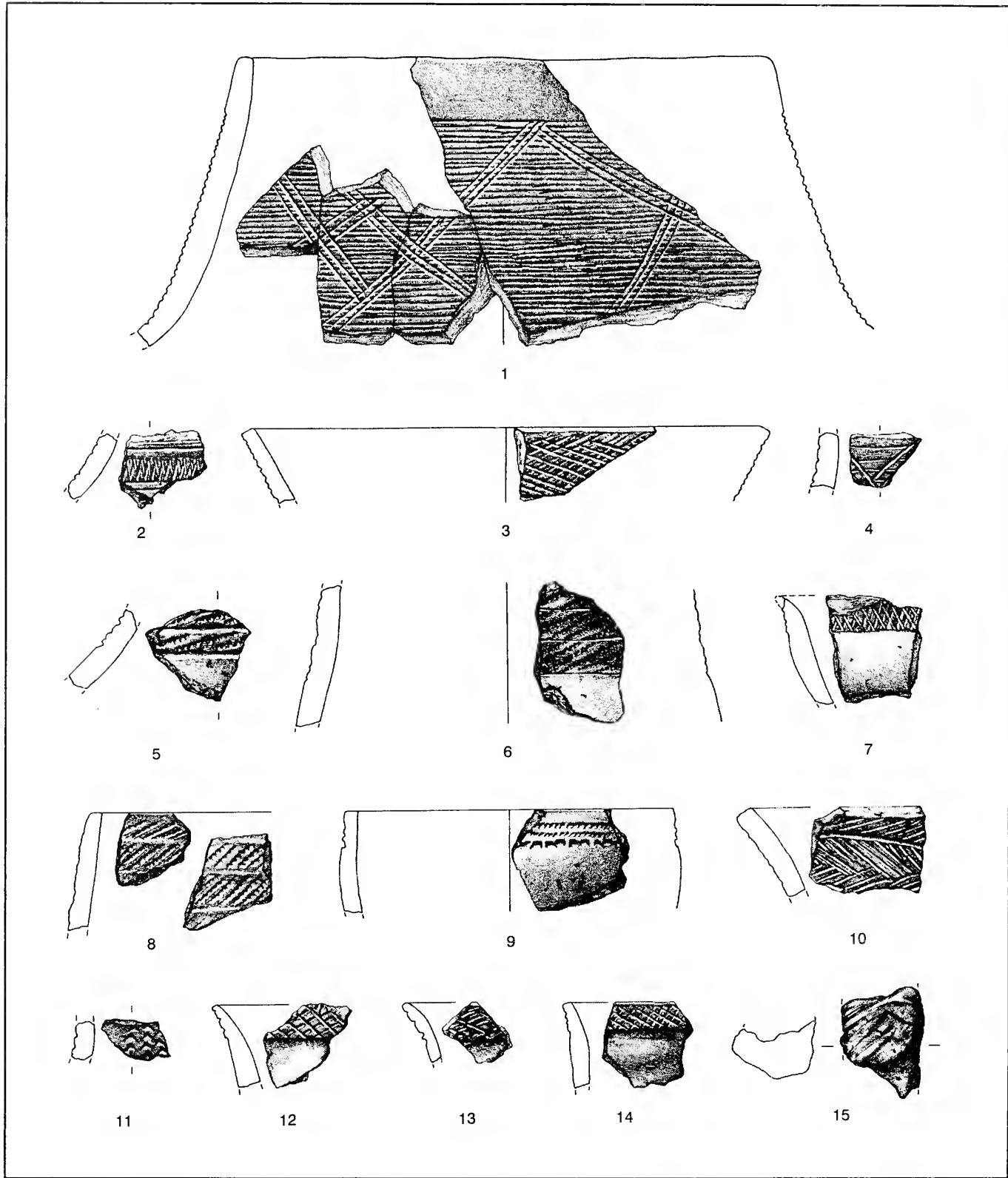


Fig. 13. Pottery from archaeological sites west of Rundu/Namibia. 2-15Kapako N99/21. Pottery from Rundu town. 1: Sarasungu N99/20. Scale: half-size.

**26. Site N98/33, Immigration Office/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.47E; 17.52S, modern**

Sand dune on southern bank of Kavango River. Area of 20 x 20 m cleaned of vegetation. Two artefact scatters, both covering an area of 3 x 3 m, at 10 m distance from each other. Pottery (Fig. 16) and stone artefacts. Both artefact scatters are centred around fireplaces. Relation between

fireplaces and artefact scatters remains unclear. Eucalyptus plantation at 20 m from the site. Surface collection.

**27. Site N98/26, Immigration Office/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.47E; 17.52S, ESA, IA**

C. 200 m South of Kavango River, 30 m north of a Eucalyptus plantation, 1 km east of a police post. Loose

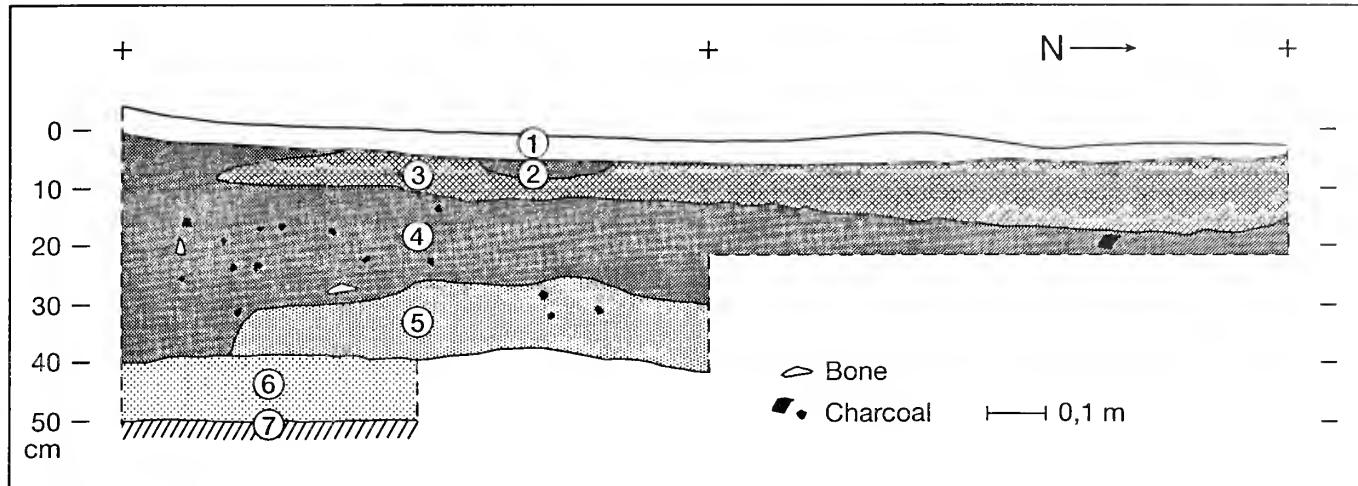


Fig. 14. Profile section of test trench at site N99/21.



Fig. 15 Site N98/21 near Rundu. Artefacts eroding from redeposited gravels.

artefact scatter of 10 x 5 m. All along the river bank exposed remnants of a calcareous crust. This served as raw material source for quartzite nodules use for the production of stone artefacts as found on the site. Two ESA flakes and undecorated pottery. Surface collection.

**28. Site N98/31, Immigration Office/Rundu/Rundu District, 19.47E; 17.52S, LSA**

Sand dune on the southern river bank of Kavango river. Single stone artefact (core). The dune is at a distance of 50 m from the present course of the river. Surface collection.

**29. Site N74/2, / Vungu Vungu dairy/ Rundu District, 19.51E; 17.53S, LIA (Fig. 17).**

Beatrice Sandelowsky's excavation of 1974 (Sandelowsky 1979). The test trench near Vungu Vungu dairy delivered a stratigraphic sequence with one archaeological horizon rich in pottery and bone fragments. This site is thoroughly described in Sandelowsky's 1979 paper.

The pottery, with its characteristic bands of cross-hatched incisions, gave the name to the "Vungu Vungu Type" of LIA pottery. Sandelowsky's excavation yielded a radiocarbon age for this pottery of AD 1630 +/- 45 (Pta-

236). The Vungu Vungu group of sites, including the following catalogues entries 27-36 is currently under analysis and will be published separately by Eileen Kose, Cologne.

**30. Site N96/3, Vungu Vungu dairy/ Rundu District, 19.51E; 17.53S, LIA**

Eastern part of the Vungu Vungu dairy area and east of B.Sandelowsky's excavation (Sandelowsky 1979). Loose artefact scatter of 60 x 400 m. Numerous recent disturbance connected with military activity.

Within the N96/3 area four different areas have been defined: N96/3-1; N96/3-2; N96/3-3; N96/3-4 (=N98/32-2). Activities on the site include surface collection and test excavations. Finds: iron slag, pottery, stone artefacts, bone, charcoal.

**31. Site N98/37, Vungu Vungu dairy/ Rundu District, 19.51E; 17.53S, LIA**

C. 200 m East of the pump station of Vungu Vungu dairy on the southern bank of Kavango River. Iron slag, potsherds (Fig. 18), core. Surface collection.

**32. Site N98/36, Vungu Vungu dairy/ Rundu District, 19.51E; 17.53S, LIA**

C. 250 m East of the pump station of Vungu Vungu dairy on the southern bank of Kavango river. Potsherds (Fig. 18). Surface collection.

**33. Site N98/35, Vungu Vungu dairy/ Rundu District, 19.51E; 17.53S, LIA**

C. 50 m West of site N98/32. 20 x 8 m large pit. Erosion channel. Potsherd. Surface collection.

**34. Site N98/32, Vungu Vungu dairy/ Rundu District, 19.51E; 17.53S, LIA**

Area of erosion parallel to Kavango river, 10 m west of large erosion channel (Fig. 19) running to the river from south to north. 7 x 4 m Artefact scatter with fireplace. A test trench was excavated around the remnants of an iron

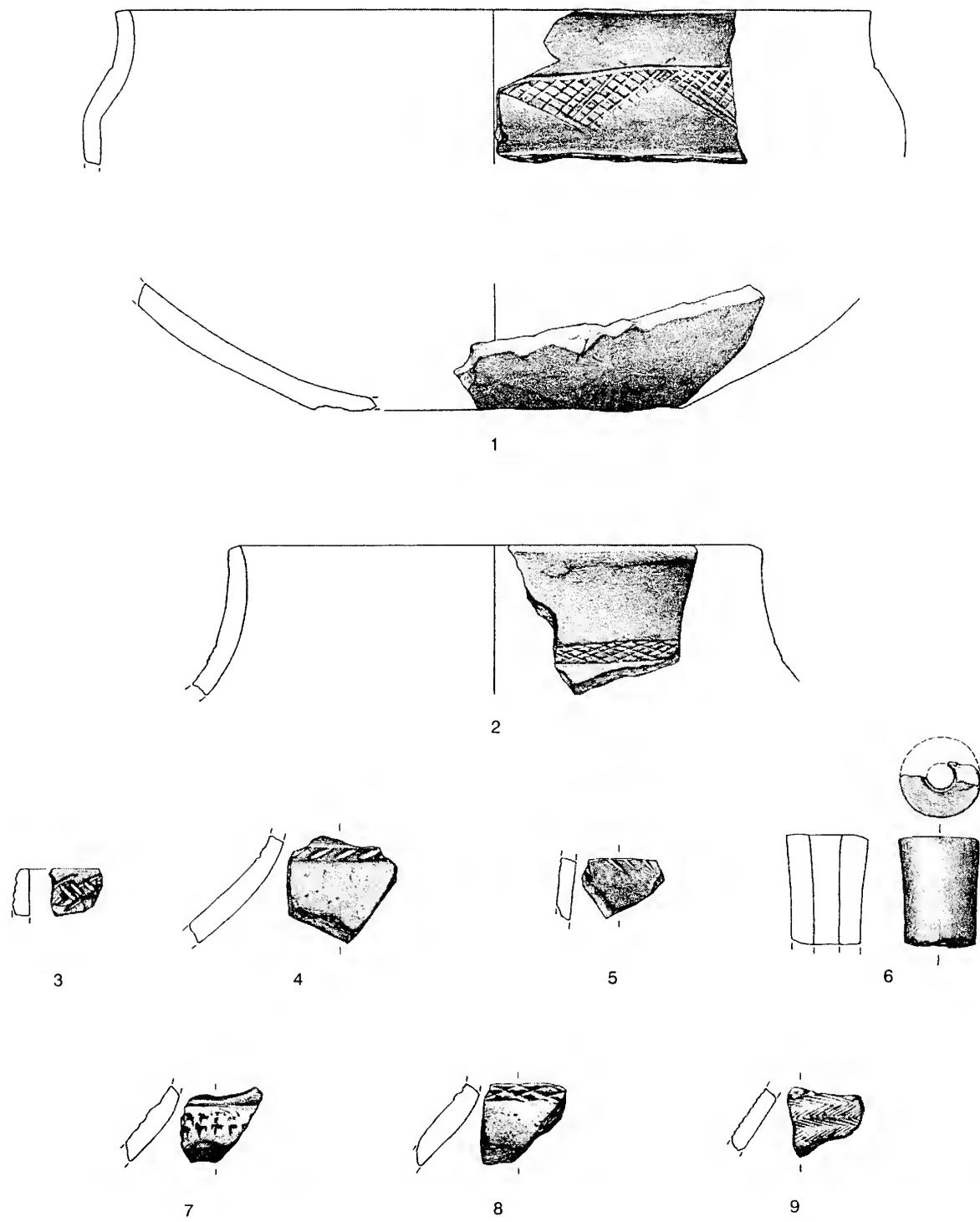


Fig. 16. Pottery from archaeological sites near Rundu/Namibia. 1 Sarasungu N98/23. 2: Rundu Immigration office N98/25. 3-6 Immigration office N98/26 (6: clay pipe). 7-9 Immigration office N98/33. Scale: half-size.

furnace (Fig. 20). Iron slag, ostrich eggshell bead, bone. The pottery, with bands of incised criss-cross patterns, gave the name to the Vungu-Vungu Type (Figs 18-21). For Radio-carbon dates see table 4.

**35. Site N98/30, Vungu Vungu dairy/ Rundu District, 19.51E; 17.52S, LIA**

Area of erosion parallel to Kavango river. 20 m east of large erosion channel. 30 m east of site N98/32. 10 x 4 m

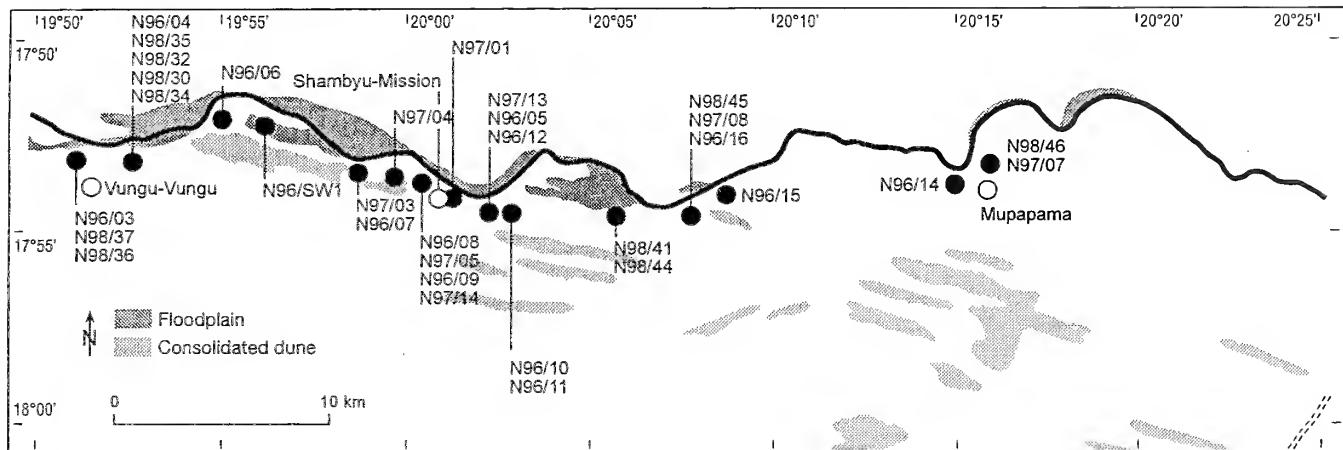


Fig. 17. Rundu District, Namibia, detailed Map B (cf. Fig. 7). Archaeological sites east of Rundu, between Vungu-Vungu and Mupapama.

dense artefact scatter. Iron slag, bone, stone artefacts, pottery (Fig. 21-22). Surface collection.

**36. Site N98/34, Vungu Vungu dairy/ Rundu District, 19.51E; 17.53S, LIA**

Area of erosion on the southern bank of Kavango river, 150 m west of the dairy area. 70-80 m east of erosion channel (cf. N98/30 and N98/32). Dense artefact scatter of 15 x 8 m. Abundant iron slag, remnants of iron stove, pottery, stone artefacts. Surface collection.

**37. Site N96/4, Vungu Vungu dairy/ Rundu District, 19.51E; 17.53S, LIA**

0,4 m High erosion step on alluvial sand, sandy, humiferous horizon with pottery. 30 x 2 m artefact scatter. Pottery (Fig. 21), charcoal, stone artefacts. Surface collection.

**38. Site N96/6, Vungu Vungu dairy/ Rundu District, 19.54E; 17.51S, LIA**

Slight hill with trees. 10 m south of the river, ashy horizon eroding from the slope. Charcoal, pottery. Four different artefact scatters with pottery, charcoal and tuyère. Surface collection.

**39. Site N96/SW1, Rundu District, 19.56E; 17.52S, LIA**

Southern bank of Kavango river, 10 m south of the river. 300 m East of small island. 15 m East of erosion channel. 5 x 5 m Artefact scatter. Pottery, bones. Surface collection.

**40. Site N97/03, Shambyu-Ngone/Rundu District, 19.58E; 17.53S, ESA**

C. 30 m North of the river shore, 0,5 - 0,8 m under water, in front of small island. Heavily eroded stone artefacts with water polish. For quartzite handaxes, two cores. Surface collection.

**41. Site N96/7, Shambyu/Rundu District, 19.58E; 17.53S, unclassified**

West of Shambyu Mission, flat hill with area of erosion along the river. 0,7 m thick grey layer on yellow, sandy substrate. Artefacts. Surface collection.

**42. Site N96/8, Shambyu/Rundu District, 20.01E; 17.54S, LIA**

1,28 km West of Shambyu Mission, 6-8 m high slope along the Kavango river. Possible furnace site. Large iron slags (Ofensau) within a 20 x 60 m slag scatter. No other archaeological finds. Surface collection.

**43. Site N97/04, Shambyu/ Rundu District, 19.59E; 17.53S, ESA**

On the slight slope of the southern river bank of Kavango River, c. 800 m west of the Shambyu Mission buildings, a single handaxe was found. Surface collection.

**44. Site N97/14, Shambyu/Rundu District, 20.00E; 17.54S, LIA**

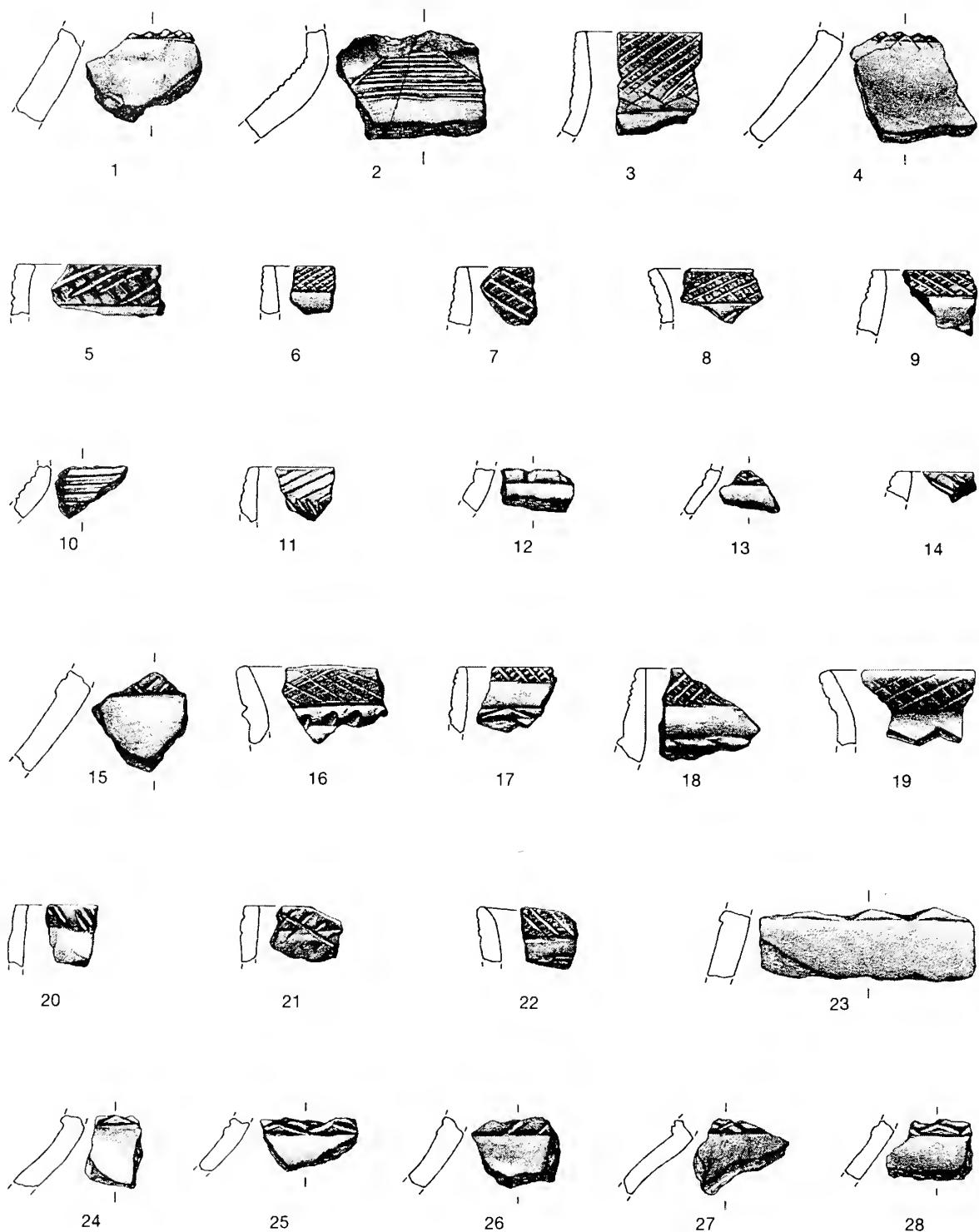
The site is about 200 m west of site N97/05. On the southern bank of Kavango River, c. 800 m south of the present river, circular structures indicate a former village site with an artefact scatter of 40 x 40 m. Undecorated and decorated pottery of the Vungu-Vungu type have been found. Surface collection.

**45. Site N96/9, Shambyu/Rundu District, 20.00E; 17.54S, IA**

Undecorated rim sherd was collected c. 1 km south of Kavango River. Surface collection.

**46. Site N97/05, Shambyu/Rundu District, 20.00E; 17.54S, ELSA, LSA**

The site called Otjikoto is 500 m west of Shambyu mission on the river bank. Archaeological artefacts were eroded from an old river bank consisting of red sand and



**Fig. 18. Pottery from archaeological sites east of Rundu/Nambia, near Vungu-Vungu. 1 Vungu-Vungu N98/37. 2: Vungu-Vungu N98/36. 3-28 Vungu-Vungu N98/32. Scale: half-size.**

underlying gravel. The river bank is 5-6 m high, at a distance of 250 m - 300 m from the present course of the river. Among the artefacts are micro-segments, sometimes burned, blade fragments, cores, flakes, and numerous chunks made of quartzite. Surface collection.

**47. Site N97/01, Shambyu Catholic Mission/Rundu District, 20.00E; 17.54, LSA, IA**

On the southern banks of Kavango River, east of the Mission building and in the mission's garden, an artefact scatter of 10 x 2 m was localised. Undecorated pottery,



**Fig. 19. Site Vungu-Vungu N98/32. Excavation surface with remnants of iron melting furnace.**

stone tools (including a microlithic segment of chalcedony) and unretouched artefacts (including a blade of chalcedony). Surface collection.

**48. Site N97/13, Shambyu/Rundu District, 20.02E; 17.54S, LSA, IA**

Area 1: Near the slight slope of the southern bank of Kavango River, 1,5 km east of Shambyu Mission between the tombs of Chief Mushinga and Chief Bomagandu, one area of dispersed artefacts and one dense artefact scatter were identified (50 x 30 m).

Remnants of a former Iron melting site were found: iron slag, iron ore and tuyere fragments. Decorated and undecorated pottery was also found. The site is located near to a former Royal Kraal which existed until the time of Chief Mbangendu in the 1940's.

Area 2: C. 7 m Southwest of the tomb of Chief Mampa Mushinga and at the western fringe of an iron melting site, an artefact scatter was identified. The iron melting site lies on red, ferrous gravel layers covered by calcretes.

The site had previously been identified in 1996, but only in 1997 were some microlithic segments found along side other stone tools, unretouched stone artefacts and decorated and undecorated pottery. Surface collection.

**49. Site N96/05, Shambyu/Rundu District, 20.02E; 17.54S, LIA**

Artefact scatter (300 x 100 m) on the river bank c. 1,5 km east of Shambyu mission. Iron slag, pottery, quartzite artefacts. Furnaces (Ofensau). At the eastern periphery of the area, near a small cemetery, the tomb of chief Mbanbangandu. Among the artefacts are decorated and undecorated sherds (Fig. 22), retouched and un-retouched stone artefacts, bones, ostrich eggshell beads and charcoal. The site was revisited in 1998 and fragments of tuyeres found, thus indicating iron smelting. Surface collection.

**50. Site N 96/12, Shambyu/Rundu District, 20.02E; 17.53S, unclassified**

C. 150 m SSW of Kavango river near the chief's tombs.



**Fig. 20. Site Vungu-Vungu N98/32. Excavation surface with remnants of iron melting stove.**

Artefacts eroding from the river bank. Stone artefacts. Surface collection.

**51. Site N96/10, Shambyu/Rundu District, 20.03E; 17.54S, unclassified**

Stone artefacts and pottery from erosion channel 1,5 km north of Kavango River. Surface collection.

**52. Site N96/11, Shambyu/Rundu District, 20.03E; 17.53S, unclassified**

C. 200 m North of Kavango river. 10 x 10 m pottery sherd scatter on dune. Surface collection.

**53. Site N98/41, Shambyu/Rundu District, 20.05E; 17.54S, MSA, IA, modern**

Artefact scatter (50 x 50 m) near old river bank of Kavango river. Levallois flakes (MSA) and pottery, iron slag and modern cans indicating a farm site. Surface collection.

**10.554. Site N98/44, Shambyu/Rundu District, 20.05E; 17.54S, LIA**

West of a modern farmsite at Tjae, on a Kalahari sand dune covered by ferrous crust. Under the crust is a calcareous crust with nodules of sandstone containing iron. Within the overlying ferrous crust nodules of iron ore are to be found over an area of 150 x 200 m. Numerous accumulations of debris indicate the former iron exploitation of the area.

**55. Site N98/45, Shambyu/Rundu District, 20.07E; 17.54S, ESA, MSA, IA**

The site (70 x 200 m) is on the southern bank of Kavango river close to the Shambyu-Nyangana road. Iron exploitation area with pits near sand stone formation (Fig. 23). Heaps of debris from quarry work (Fig. 24). Finds of iron ore. No related archaeological finds but ESA and MSA stone artefacts. Surface collection.

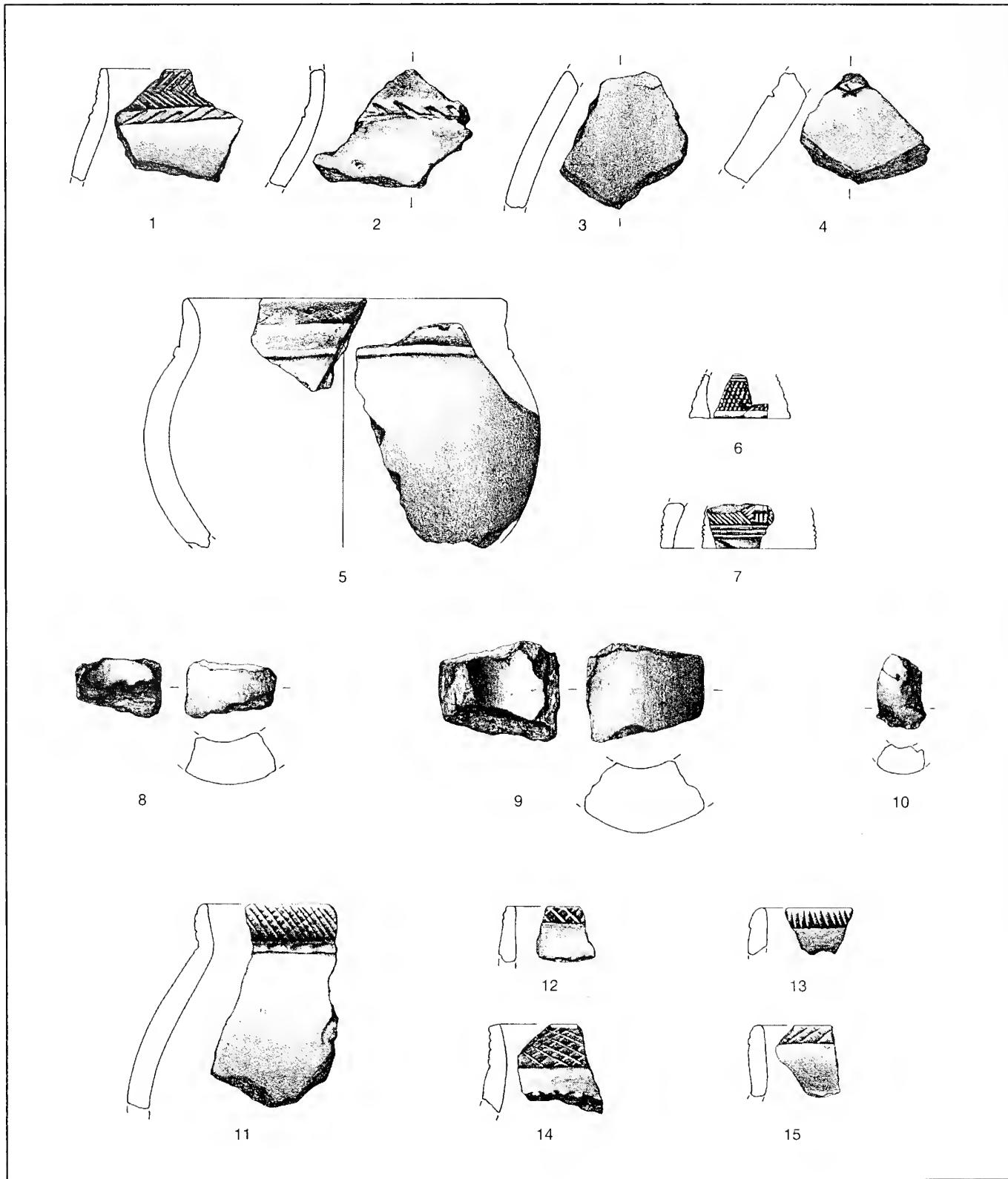


Fig. 21 Pottery from archaeological sites east of Rundu/Nambia, near Vungu-Vungu. 1-10 Vungu-Vungu N98/32 (6-7 clay pipes, 8-10 tuyeres). 11: Vungu-Vungu N96/4. 12-15 Vungu-Vungu N98/30. Scale 2/3.

**56. Site N97/08, Katondo/Shambyu/Rundu District, 20.07E; 17.54S, LSA**

Stone artefact scatter near gravel pit. Surface collection.

**57. Site N96/16, Shambyu/Rundu District, 20.07E; 17.54S, unclassified**

Numerous quartzite artefacts from a steep slope 50 m SE

of Kavango River. Surface collection.

**58. Site N96/15, Shambyu/Rundu District, 20.08E; 17.53S, LIA**

Artefact scatters near gravel pit. Pottery and stone artefacts. Surface collection.

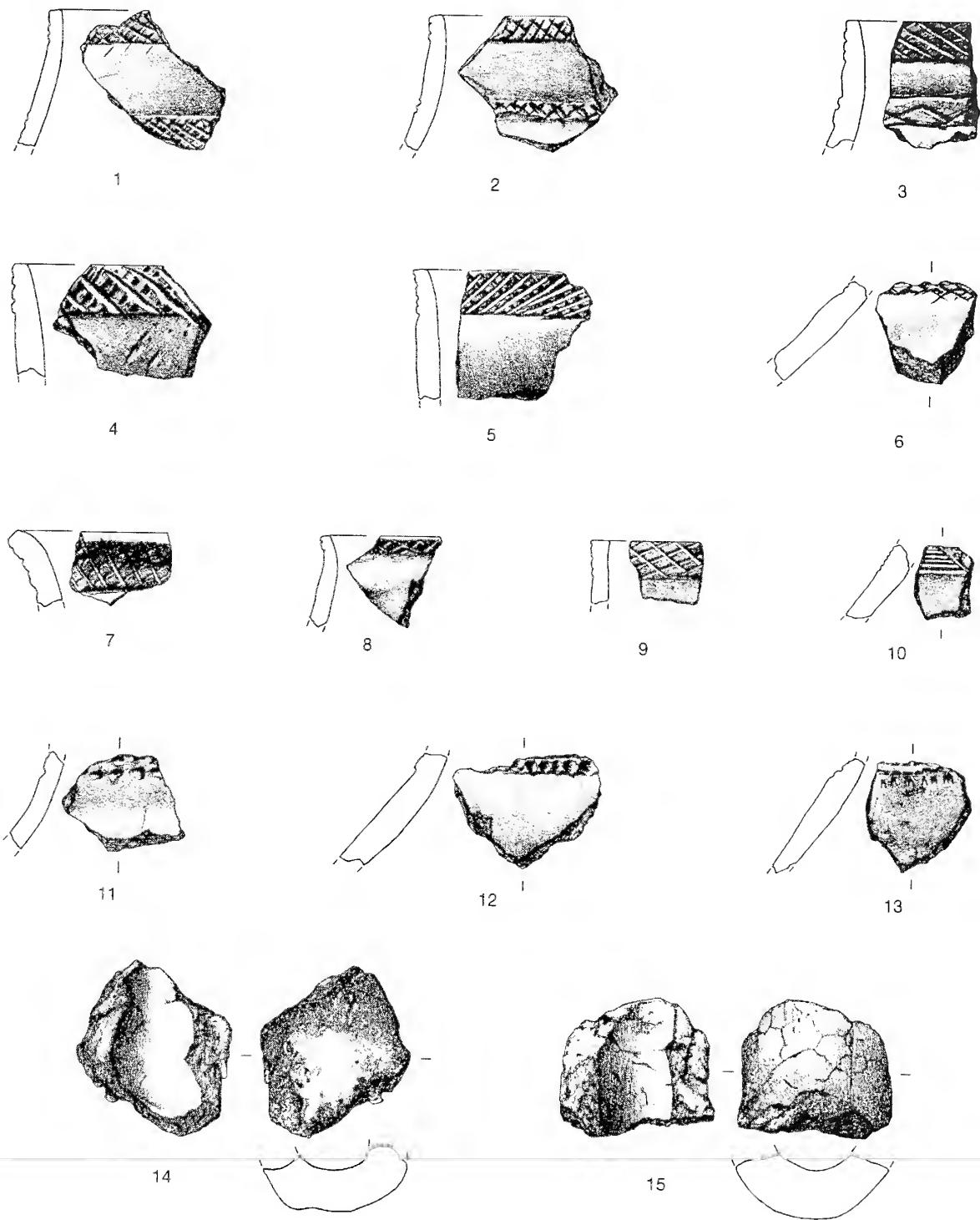


Fig. 22 Pottery from archaeological sites east of Rundu/Nambia, between Vungu-Vungu and Shambyu mission. 1-2 Vungu-Vungu N98/30. 2: Vungu-Vungu N98/36. 3-15 Shambyu Mission N96/5 (14-15 tuyeres). Scale 2/3.

**59. Site N96/14, Mupapama/Rundu District, 20.15E; 17.53S, unclassified**

Large quartzite boulders on a 8 m high eroded slope in the southern bank of Kavango River. 300 m NNW of Mupapama village. Brown, grey-spotted artefacts scatter around the quartzite boulders which served as raw material sources. Surface collection.

**60. Site N98/46, Mupapama/Rundu District, 20.15E; 17.53S, MSA, LIA**

Iron ore source (more than 600 x 400 m) with exploitation pits and accumulations of debris on the southern bank of Kavango River. Huge quartzite hammer stones from quarry work (Fig. 25). Numerous MSA artefacts on the same site. Surface collection.



Fig. 23. View of iron exploitation site N98/45.



Fig. 24. View of iron exploitation site N98/45. Detail: Debris from quarry work.

**61. Site N97/07, Mupapama/Rundu District, 20.15E; 17.53S, LSA, IA (Fig. 26).**

Artefact scatter on the southern bank of Kavango River. Red ferrous sand with iron nodules and dissolved fragments of a calcareous crust. Artefacts made of red chalcedony, pottery. Surface collection.

**62. Site N96/13, Omatako/Rundu District, 20.28E; 17.57S, LSA, IA**

200 m West of where the Omuramba Omatako flows into the Kavango, on the southern bank of Kavango River, near Ndonga village. Stone artefacts and pottery. Surface collection.

**63. Site N98/47, Omatako/Rundu District, 20.28E; 17.57S, LSA**

Dense 20 x 20 m artefact scatter with microliths on a dune near the mouth of Omuramba Omatako, 50 m south of the Kavango. Numerous formal tools made of indurated shale. Surface collection.

**64. Site N98/48, Omatako/Rundu District, 20.28E; 17.57S, ELSA, IA**

10 x 5 m Artefact scatter on the eastern bank of Omuramba Omatako to where it flows into Kavango River. Pottery (Fig. 27), calcedony artefacts. Surface collection.

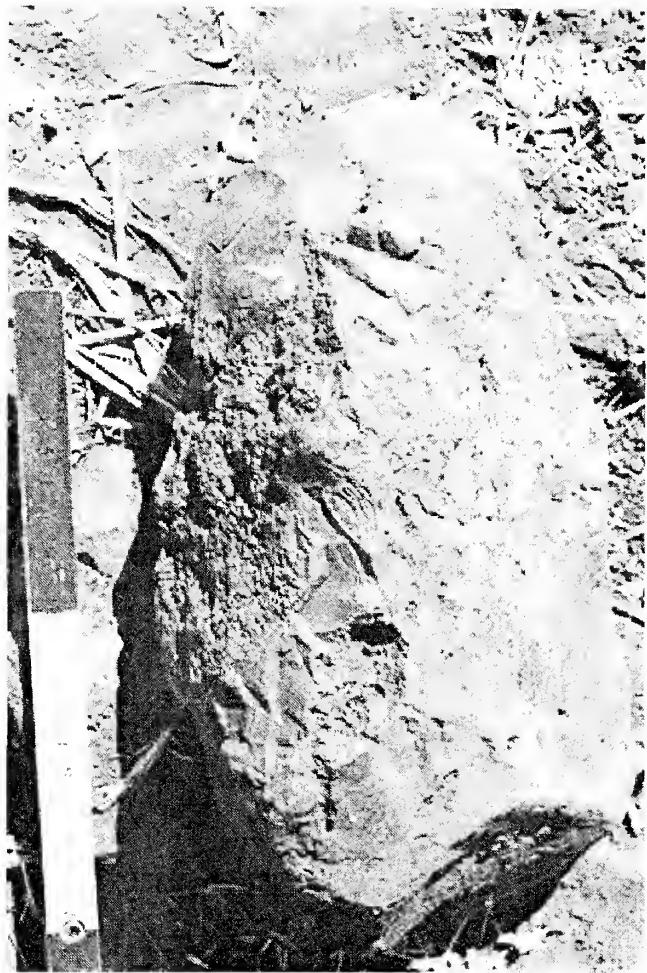


Fig. 25. Iron exploitation site N98/46. Stone hammer for quarry work.

**65. Site N98/49, Shankara/Rundu District, 20.30E; 17.57S, ESA**

Gravel pit for road works, 3 km east of the Omuramba Omatako mouth. ESA artefacts of quartzite, two handaxes. The raw material for the ESA artefacts is from a calcareous crust which is now exposed in the gravel pit. As artefacts are to be found in the whole area of present gravel exploitation, the site must be regarded as completely destroyed. LSA finds from the N98/48 site are from the same raw material source. Surface collection.

**66. Site N99/15, Hamwiyi/Rundu District, 19.44E; 18.14S, LIA**

Fired clay and iron ore nodules, probable remnants of an iron smelting site or furnace, were found in the river bed of Omuramba Fountein, 260 m west of the road Ncaute-Rundu. The area is disturbed by numerous erosion channels. The Forestry Nursery Hamwiyi is close to the site. Surface collection.

**67. Site N99/16, Omatako/Rundu District, 20.06E; 18.14S, LSA**

Stone artefacts made of chalcedony (redeposited raw material nearby) in front of a steep sandstone escarpment

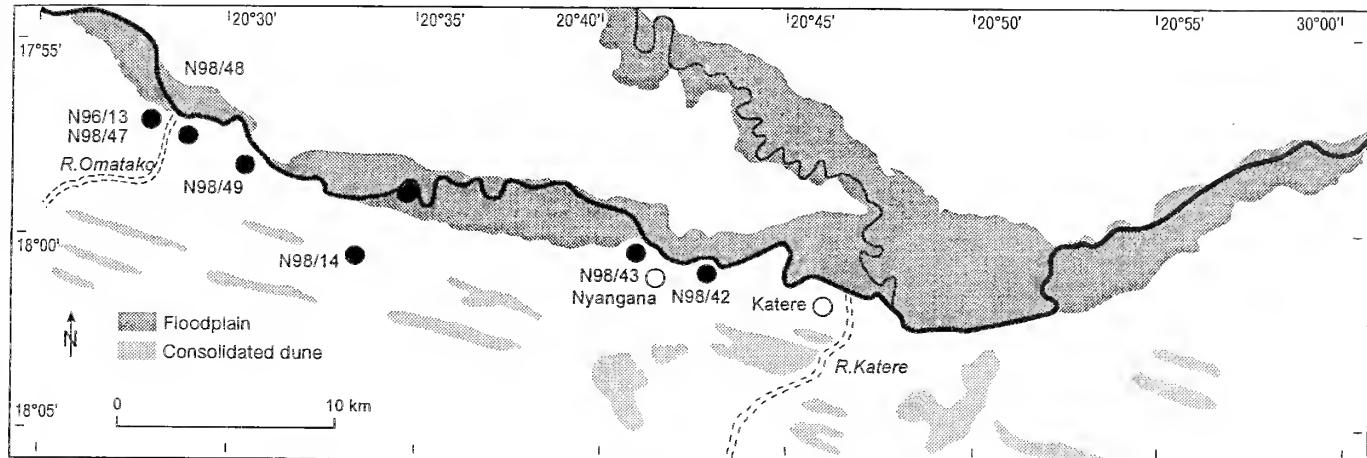


Fig. 26. Rundu District, Namibia, detailed Map C (*cf.* Fig. 7). Archaeological sites east of Rundu, between Omatako River mouth and Katere River mouth.

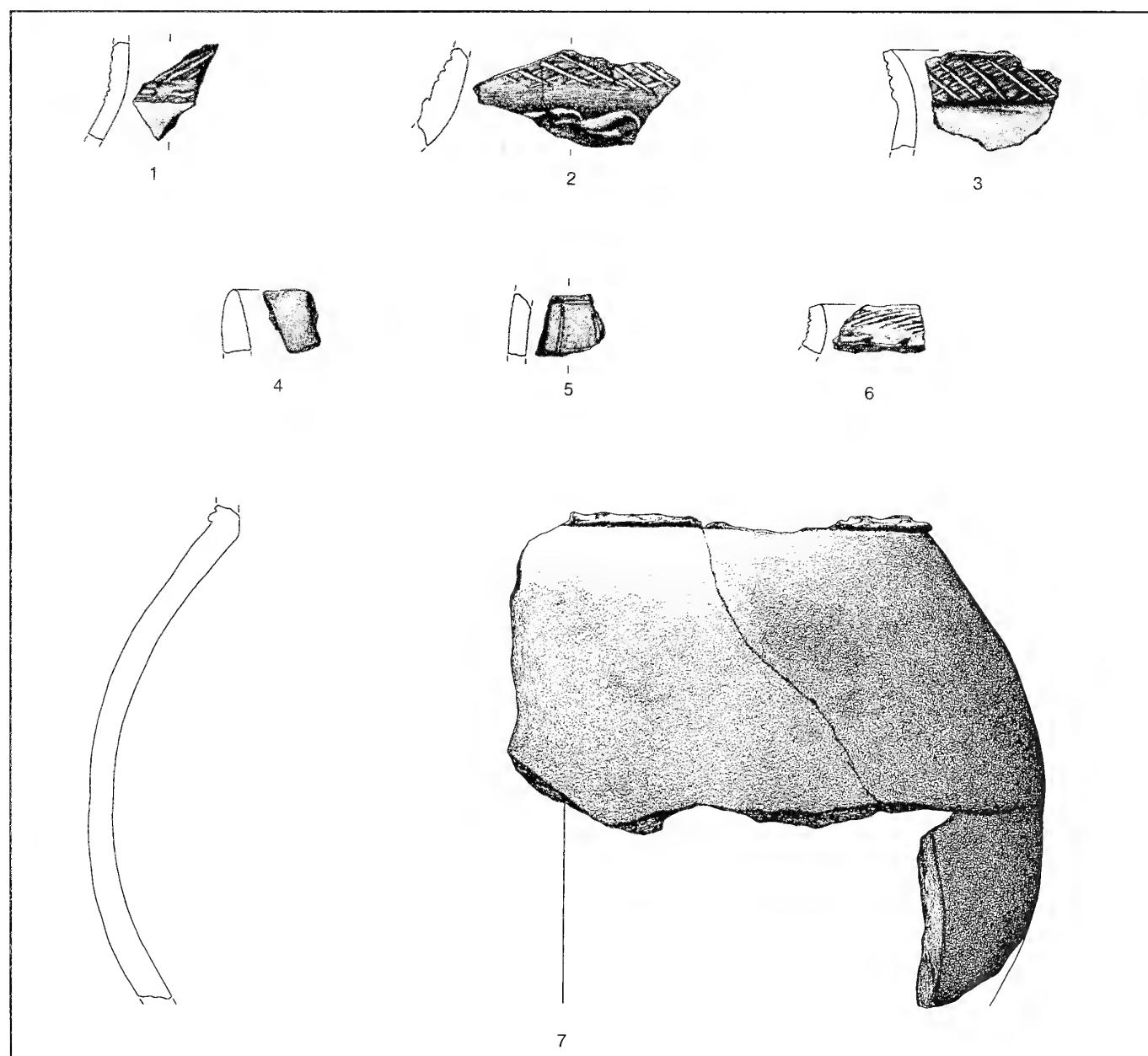


Fig. 27. Pottery from archaeological sites east of Rundu/Namibia, between Omatako River mouth and Katere River mouth. 1: Omatako Mouth N98/48. 2-5,7: Nyangana N98/43. 6: Nyangana N98/42.

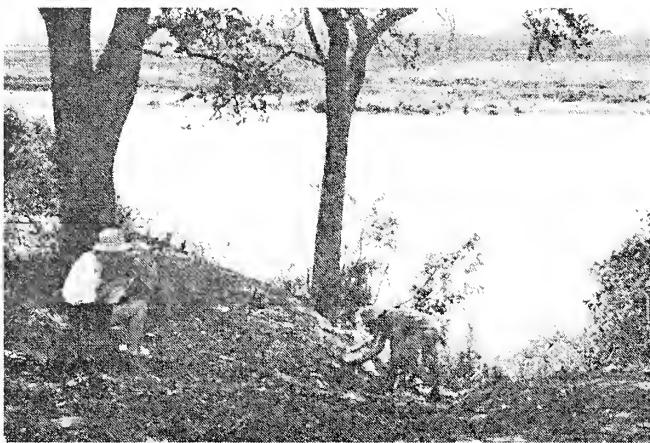


Fig. 28 View of the test trench at site N98/43.

near the banks of Omuramba Omatako. The site is north of the track Taratara-Shakambu. Surface collection.

#### 68. Site N99/17, Omatako/Rundu District, 20.07E; 18.12S, LSA

Stone artefacts made of chalcedony were found in front of a sandstone escarpment north of the Taratara-Shakambu Track. In this area abundant sandstone slabs suitable for rock engravings. Intensive search for rock art without any result. Chalcedony artefacts produced from raw material nodules eroded from the underlying aeolic sandstone of which only small remnants can be found. Erosion caused heavy weathering and rounding of debris. Afterwards the weathered debris became stabilized in a Mangane crust. Erosion channel has exposed parts of these Mangane crusts and altered them into gravel which has since become widely dispersed. These gravels occur now as debris cover containing chalcedony nodules. Surface collection.

#### 69. Site N99/18, Omatako/Rundu District, 20.19E; 18.12S, MSA

Near the Taratara Primary School, at the local well on a huge Kalahari dune covering the Omatako aquifer, MSA artefacts were collected, e.g. unipolar blades, a Levallois core, end scrapers on blades and on flakes. Surface collection.

#### 70. Site N98/14, Omatako/Rundu District, 20.32E; 18.01S, MSA

The site is some meters south of the tarred road from Rundu to Divundu, on the back of a fossile dune. Several MSA artefacts were collected. The raw material comes from a freshwater-tuff with quartzite nodules. The inventory comprises side scrapers and large flakes which come from the southern part of a knocking pile which is crossed by the road. Surface collection.

#### 71. Site N99/19, Khaudom/Rundu District, 20.33E; 18.35S, modern

Tamsu, situated in the river bed of the Omuramba Khaudom, is the most important water hole of the region. During summer 1999 it had dried up. Intensive archaeo-

logical prospection around this water hole and around the margin of the whole Tamsu depression yielded very poor results. Some glass beads were the only artefacts found. Numerous giraffe bones are dispersed around the water-hole. In the water hole, a huge section of several meters is exposed, comprising gypsum horizons, muds, fluvial and aeolian sands. Surface collection.

#### 72. Site N98/43, Ndonga/Rundu District, 20.42E; 18.00S, MSA, LIA, modern

The site is 2 km west of site N98/42, c. 55 m north of the gravel pad Katere-Ndonga near the river banks of the Kavango River (Fig. 28) in Ndonga village.

The archaeological finds come both from the surface and from a test trench. On the surface a group of several artefact scatters was recognized. These cover an area of 60 x 30 m. The surface finds comprise decorated and undecorated pottery, stone tools and unretouched artefacts, bones and charcoal. Slags and parts of the wall of an iron stove were also found. Two Levallois flakes were found among the stone artefacts. As some of the finds were eroded from the river bank, a small test trench was also excavated (N98/43//5/5). This yielded three archaeological horizons, the central horizon with a nearly complete pot (see Fig. 29, layer 6 and Fig. 27, 7), bones and charcoal. For radiocarbon dates see Table 4. Stratigraphy (Fig. 29):

1. Loose dark-brown sand.
2. Homogeneous, consolidated brown-yellow dune sand.
3. Dark grey clay lens.
4. Dark grey, sandy humic cultural layer (lens) with charcoal and archaeological finds.
5. Homogeneous, consolidated brown-yellow dune sand.
6. Dark grey, sandy humic cultural layer with charcoal and archaeological finds, large potsherd with intentionally deposited bone and iron inside.
7. Fluvial, dark-brown sand.
8. Dark brown, sandy cultural layer with charcoal and archaeological finds.
9. Fluvial sand, changing brown and grey colours.

#### 73. Site N98/42, Nyangana/Rundu District, 20.43E; 18.01S, modern

The site is situated on the back of a fossile dune (Fig. 30) in Sekoro village. The dune was cut by the Kavango River (c. 200 m south of the Sekoro supermarket). A small number of artefacts are dispersed within an area of 300 x 300 m. Finds include decorated and undecorated pottery (Fig. 27). The artefacts probably indicate an early modern settlement site.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Fieldwork was carried out in 1996-1999 by Martin Albrecht, Erich Claßen, Wolfgang Frank, Klaus-Dieter Gralow, Goodman Gwazira, Bethel Katjero, Christina Kempcke-Richter, Rudolph Kuper, Augustinus Kwanyama,

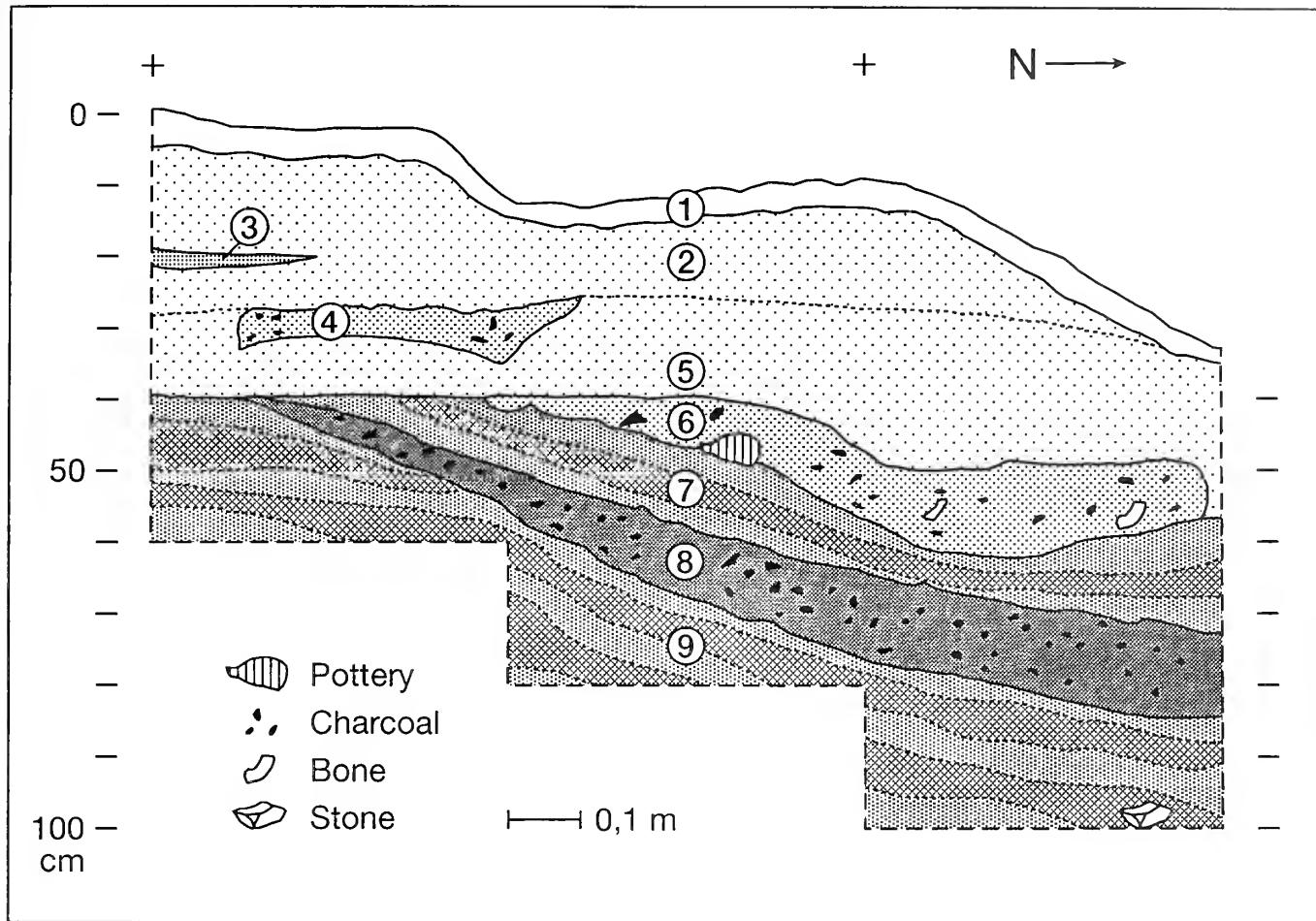


Fig. 29. Site N98/43. Profile section of test trench.



Fig. 30. View from site N98/42 to the west (up the river). N98/42 lies on one of the highest fossil dunes on the river banks.

Lucas Mathias, Christian Masule, Christian Reepmeyer, Stefan Wenzel and the present author. Artefact inventories were produced by Daniela Holst, Eileen Kose and Lee Clare. Hartwig H. Schluse and Anja Rüschmann prepared the illustrations. Hubert Berke and Joris Peters analysed faunal remains and Barbara Eichhorn botanical remains which will all later be published. Bernhard Weninger,

Eberhard Norkus and Pavel Velicky prepared the new radiocarbon dates. Finance for this work came from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft Bonn (DFG) within the SFB 389 ACACIA, research unit B4 (Kuper/Richter), Institut für Ur- und Frühgeschichte, Forschungsstelle Afrika.

Mrs Paulina Heimbili (Ruuga), Mr Vigilus Hausiku (Ruuga), chief Hayi Hengazu Sigueda (Kapako) and chief Fransi Hayingura (Mbunya) generously allowed us to excavate in their maize and millet fields, dunes and villages along the river.

We are indebted to Beatrice Sandelowsky, Alfons M. Dikuua, Hon. Servatius Kapirika and Father van Rosmalen for valuable informations. Wilhelm G. Möhlig, Andrew B. Smith, Ralf Vogelsang, Cornelia Limprecht and Hartmut Lang and an anonymous referee provided me with additional information and informed me about recent publications. Chief curator E.U.Mombolah of the National Museum of Namibia and the National Monuments Council of Namibia supported our project and gave a research permit. TUCSIN (The University Centre for Studies in Namibia) provided lodging for our team and helped to prepare our expeditions. For proofreading of this paper I am again indebted to Lee Clare.

## REFERENCES

Ervedosa, C. 1980. *Arqueologia Angolana*. Benguela. 426S.

Fisch, M. 1994. Die Kavangojäger im nordosten Namibias. Windhoek: Namibia Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft. 308p.

Fleisch, A. & Möhlig, W.J.G. 2002. The Kavango peoples in the past. Local historiographies from northern Namibia. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe. 344p.

Hall, M. 1987. The changing past. Farmers, kings and traders in southern Africa 200-1860. Johannesburg: Currey Philip. 161p. (103-116)

Huffman, T.N. 1994. Toteng pottery and the origins of Bambata. *Southern African Field Archaeology* 3:3-9.

Jacobson, L. 1987. The archaeology of the Kavango. *Journal SWA Scientific Society* 40/41:149-158.

Kinahan, J. 1986. Settlement patterns and regional exchange: evidence from recent Iron Age sites on the Kvango River, northeastern Namibia. *Cimbebasia* B3 109-116.

Leser, H. 1982. *Namibia*. Stuttgart: Klett.

Otto, A. 1977/1978. An introductory note on the manufacturing techniques of clay vessels among different Bantu-speaking groups of northern South west Afric. *SWA Sci. Soc. Journal* 32: 95-127

Ramos, M. 1984. L'évolution des industries lithiques de Angola a partir de la fin du Paléolithique inférieur. *L'Anthropologie (Paris)* 88:403-412.

Richter, J. 1991. Studien zur Urgeschichte Namibias. *Africa Praehistorica* 3, Köln: Heinrich-Barth-Institut 345p.

Richter, J. 1993. The Messum-Menongue-Complex: Early Holocene stone tool assemblages in Namibia and Angola. *Quartär* 43/44:163-171.

Sandelowsky, B. H. 1979. Kapako and Vungu Vungu: Iron Age sites on the Kavango River. *South African Archaeological Bulletin, Goodwin Series* 3:52-61.

Shackley, M. 1986. A macrolithic factory site at Masari, Kavango (South West Africa/Namibia): affinities and interpretations. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* 41:69-80.

Sydow, W. 1967. The pre-European pottery of South West Africa. *Cimbebasia Memoir* 1. Windhoek: 74 S., 104 Abb.

Vogelsang, R., Eichhorn, B., & Richter, J. 2002. Holocene human occupation and vegetation history in northern Namibia. *Die Erde* 133:113-132.

## INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

It is the responsibility of the author(s) to submit accurate, well-prepared manuscripts. The editors reserve the right to reject or return manuscripts for revision or retyping if they do not comply with the provisions as set out below. This decision, however, will be taken in consultation with the Editorial Board appointed by *Southern African Field Archaeology*. Manuscripts submitted to *Southern African Field Archaeology* will be refereed by at least two members of the Editorial Board or by referees appointed by them.

Manuscripts submitted to *Southern African Field Archaeology* should not be under consideration by any other journal at the same time, or have been published elsewhere. Manuscripts are accepted for review with the understanding that the submission has been approved by all of the authors concerned. Authors bear the responsibility for securing permission for the use of figures, maps, and other material which is not their own. If personal communications are used it is understood that such citations have been approved.

The length of manuscripts is a matter for agreement between the author(s) and Editors. Manuscripts should, however, not normally exceed 5000 words in length. Initially, three good quality copies of the manuscript, figures and tables must be submitted to the Editors. If photographs are included in the manuscript, send only one set. Faxed copies will not be considered for refereeing.

Manuscripts must be typed on one side only of A4 pages, using double spacing, except for the references. Footnotes should be avoided; if necessary they must appear at the end of the manuscript. The following format is required:

- Title at the top of the page.
- Author(s) name.
- Full postal address.
- Abstract of 100 to 150 words summarising the main points.
- Acknowledgements must appear at the end of the manuscript.
- All references quoted in the text must appear after the acknowledgements. Use Harvard system for references, but do not italicise book titles and journals.

Tables and figures must be submitted camera-ready. Each table must be typed on a separate page and included after the references. The captions must appear at the top of tables. When setting tables authors must allow for reduction to A4 page size.

Figures must be submitted on separate sheets. They must be drawn with waterproof ink on good quality paper or tracing film. **Only the original drawings will be accepted.** All drawings and lettering should be neatly done. Re-drawing or lettering of figures will not be undertaken by the Editors. Figures should preferably not be larger than A4 size and the lettering and fine detail must allow for reduction to at least half the original size. Rock art drawings must not be larger than A3 size, and must be reduceable to A4 size. Also refer to photographs as **Figures** in the text. The author's name, figure number and caption (if space allows), must be written on the back in soft pencil. A list of all tables and captions must be supplied on a separate sheet of paper.

All figures must show scales and symbolic keys must be included on the figures. Use **mm**, **m** and **km** (no full stops) when indicating measurements on figures or in the text, e.g., 20 mm, 0,5 m, 10 m and 20 km.

Radiocarbon age and equivalent uncalibrated date and laboratory number must be given in the text when dates are cited for the first time, e.g.,  $5000 \pm 50$  BP (Pta-123),  $10\,000 \pm 200$  BP (Pta-456) and AD  $200 \pm 50$  (Pta-789) (note spacing). Do not use full stops after BP, BC and AD. Indicate when dates have been calibrated.

To save time and production costs the final manuscripts must be submitted on IBM compatible microdisk or by e.mail. Send a hard copy of the final manuscript with the disk. **Do not send any disks until your manuscript has been accepted by the editors for publication.** Manuscripts can be submitted on MS Word, WordPerfect or as an ASCII file.

**Do not indent paragraphs or use tabs anywhere in the text. Leave a space between paragraphs. Do not justify the right margin.**

Authors must ensure that disks are properly and carefully wrapped for mailing to avoid damage. Disks will be returned to authors, without cost, using the same wrapping material. The editors take no responsibility for any damage which may occur to a disk in the mail. If authors wish to have illustrations returned they should provide stamped, self-addressed envelopes.

**Address all communications to:** The Editors, *Southern African Field Archaeology*, Albany Museum, Somerset Street, GRAHAMSTOWN 6139. Tel No.: 046 62-22312. Fax No.: 046 62-22398. e.mail addresses:

*Southern African Field Archaeology*:

Johan Binneman: [J.Binneman@ru.ac.za](mailto:J.Binneman@ru.ac.za)

Lita Webley: [L.Webley@ru.ac.za](mailto:L.Webley@ru.ac.za)



southern african  
**Field** archaeology 2002/3 Vol. 11 & 12

## CONTENTS

<b>OPINIONS</b> .....	1
<b>ARTICLES</b> .....	
Archaeological mitigation of the Letsibogo Dam: agropastoralism in southeast Botswana. <b>T.N. Huffman &amp; J. Kinahan</b> .....	4
Superficial comparisons and reality: a reassessment of the dunefield midden and the Swartkop Industry. <b>Jayson Orton</b> .....	63
Stone Age lithics from Ndondondwane. <b>Themba Zwane</b> .....	70
Archaeology along the Kavango River/Namibia. <b>Jürgen Richter</b> .....	80
<b>INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS</b> .....	inner back page